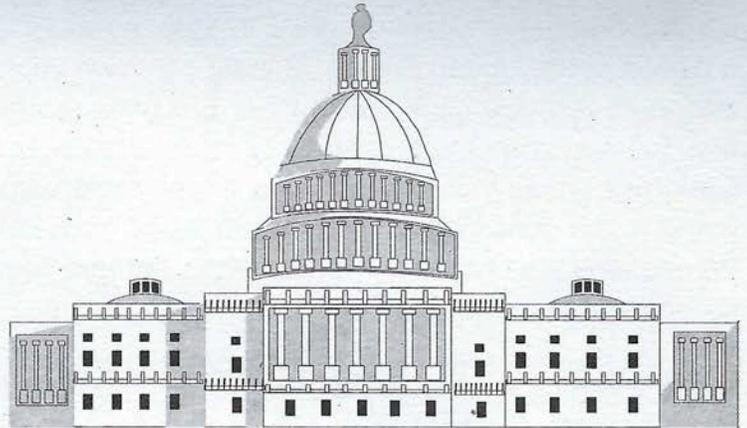


The House of Representatives

The House of Representatives is one of two legislative houses created by Article I of the Constitution. The primary responsibility of the House of Representatives is to pass laws. Along with the Senate, it also oversees offices such as the Library of Congress, the Congressional Budget Office, and the United States Tax Court.



In 1911, Congress decided that there could be no more than a total of 435 representatives in Congress. This is so the government won't get too big to govern well. Each state votes on its own representatives, and the number of representatives of each state depends on the state's population. To determine the number of representatives a state will have, the government conducts a **census** (a population count) every ten years in order to find out how many people are living in each state. Vermont, for example, has one representative, while California has fifty-three.

Representatives are elected to two-year terms. The elections occur in every even-numbered year, so every member of the House is up for reelection in each even-numbered year. To run for election to the House of Representatives, a person must be twenty-five years old, must live in the state he or she is being elected in, and must have been a citizen of the United States for at least seven years.

What does Congress discuss?

Everything that is discussed or decided by Congress is published daily in the Congressional Record when Congress is in session. Go to <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/crecord/index.html> to read the Congressional Record online.

Answer the Following

1. What is the primary duty of the House of Representatives? _____

2. How often do members of the House of Representatives run for office? _____

3. How many representatives are there? How is the number of representatives determined?

4. How can someone find out what issues Congress is debating? _____
