

## Congress

### USCIS Questions

In the Congress theme:

16. Who makes federal laws?
17. What are the two parts of the U.S. Congress?
18. How many U.S. Senators are there?
19. We elect a U.S. Senator for how many years?
20. Who is one of your state's U.S. Senators now?
24. Who does a U.S. Senator represent?
21. The House of Representatives has how many voting members?
22. We elect a U.S. Representative for how many years?
23. Name your U.S. Representative.
25. Why do some states have more Representatives than other states?
47. What is the name of the Speaker of the House of Representatives now?

Related:

41. Under our Constitution, some powers belong to the federal government. What is one power of the federal government?
55. What are two ways that Americans can participate in their democracy?

### Key Vocabulary—Congress

**act:** a law that is officially accepted by the government

**bill:** a proposed plan for a law that the government reviews

**census:** a formal count of the population in a city, county, state, or country

**citizen:** a person who legally belongs to a country and has the rights and protection of that country

**debate:** to discuss an issue in order to make a decision

**district:** an official area of a state whose citizens elect a Representative to the House of Representatives

**equal:** to be the same

**federal:** part of the central U.S. government, not state or local governments

**mental disability:** a condition of the mind that makes it difficult for someone to do things most people are able to do

**physical disability:** a condition of the body that makes it difficult for someone to do things most people are able to do

**represent:** to make decisions for another person or group of people

**representative:** elected members of a government group in the United States, such as in Congress

**run for office:** to seek a political position, such as in Congress

**sign:** to write your name on a document to show that you approve

**term:** the period of time someone serves in a political office

**treat:** to behave towards someone in a particular way

**Directions: As you watch the video, write down the answers to the questions below. Eventually you'll have your answers for all 100 civics questions.**

Congress

Who makes federal laws? USCIS #16

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Two Parts of Congress

What are the two parts of the U.S. Congress? USCIS #17

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Number of U.S. Senators

How many U.S. Senators are there? USCIS #18

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Senator Elections

We elect a U.S. Senator for how many years? USCIS #19

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Your Senators

Who is one of your state's U.S. Senators now? USCIS #20

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Who Senators Represent

Who does a U.S. Senator represent? USCIS #24

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Number of Representatives

The House of Representatives has how many voting members? USCIS #21

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Representative Elections

We elect a U.S. Representative for how many years? USCIS #22

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Your U.S. Representative

Name your U.S. Representative. USCIS #23

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Districts and Representatives

Why do some states have more Representatives than other states? USCIS #25

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The Speaker of the House Today

What is the name of the Speaker of the House of Representatives now? USCIS #47

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## How Well Do You Know The Presidency?

Read the answers below. Write the Civics Test question for each answer.

### IMPORTANT REMINDER:

Visit [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov) right before your naturalization interview for current information on the President and the Vice President.

Example: Who is the Commander in Chief of the military?

Answer: The President is the Commander in Chief.

1. \_\_\_\_\_?

Answer: They advise the President.

2. \_\_\_\_\_?

Answer: The President is in charge of the executive branch.

3. \_\_\_\_\_?

Answer: The Vice President becomes President.

4. \_\_\_\_\_?

Answer: The President vetoes bills.

5. \_\_\_\_\_?

Answer: The Secretary of State and the Secretary of Labor.

6. \_\_\_\_\_?

Answer: The Speaker of the House becomes President.

7. \_\_\_\_\_?

Answer: The President signs bills to become laws.

Read the Civics Test questions below. Write the answer for each question.

1. What is the name of the President of the United States now? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the name of the Vice President of the United States now? \_\_\_\_\_



Visit <http://americanhistory.si.edu/citizenship/index.html?theme=5> to go directly to **The Presidency** theme.

## Background Information

- Established by Article I of the Constitution, the Legislative Branch consists of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Together, they form the United States Congress.
- The Constitution grants Congress the sole authority to enact legislation and declare war, the right to confirm or reject many Presidential appointments, and gives Congress substantial investigative powers.
- In order to pass legislation and send it to the President for his signature, both the House and the Senate must pass the same bill by majority vote.
- If the President vetoes a bill, they may override his veto by passing the bill again in each chamber with at least two-thirds of each body voting in favor.

### House of Representatives

- The House of Representatives is made up of 435 elected voting members, divided among the 50 states in proportion to their total population. In addition, there are six non-voting members, representing the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and four other territories of the United States.
- The presiding officer of the House of Representatives is the Speaker of the House, elected by the Representatives. He or she is third in line of succession to the Presidency.
- Members of the House are elected every two years and must be 25 years of age, a U.S. citizen for at least seven years, and a resident of the state (but not necessarily the district) they represent.

### Senate

- The Senate is composed of 100 Senators, two for each state.
- Until the ratification of the 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1913, Senators were chosen by state legislatures, not by popular vote. Since then, they have been elected to six-year terms by the people of the state.
- Senator's terms are staggered so that about one-third of the Senate is up for reelection every two years.
- Senators must be 30 years of age, U.S. citizens for at least nine years, and residents of the state they represent.
- The Vice President of the United States serves as President of the Senate and may cast the decisive vote in the event of a tie in the Senate.

## Word Puzzle—U.S. Congress

Read the sentences. Write the words in the sentences.

Fill in the letters for each word in the puzzle.

1. Congress meets in the \_\_\_\_\_ building.
2. Some states have more representatives because they have more \_\_\_\_\_.
3. There are one \_\_\_\_\_ Senators in the U.S. Senate.
4. There are three branches of \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The House of \_\_\_\_\_ has 435 voting members.
6. We \_\_\_\_\_ Senators for six years.
7. The \_\_\_\_\_ is one part of Congress.
8. Congress makes federal \_\_\_\_\_.

1. **C** \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_ **O** \_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_ **N** \_\_\_\_\_
4. **G** \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_ **R** \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_ **E** \_\_\_\_
7. **S** \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_ **S**