

Structure of Congress Assignment

1. Read Article 1 of the Constitution and list the powers given to Congress.
 - a. Congress possesses the power to levy taxes (specifically income taxes), the collected sum being used to provide for the nation's defense and well-being.
 - b. Bonds and other methods may be utilized by Congress for it to borrow money, the United States being obligated henceforth to repay their debt.
 - c. Congress is allowed to issue coin and paper currency. The Federal Reserve was established as part of Congress' authority to bring into law what was necessary and proper for execution of its powers.
 - d. Congress was responsible for the creation of all lower courts as well as specification of the lower courts' duties and jurisdictions.
 - e. Congress is enabled to take all action necessary to create and maintain a functioning postal system that delivers mail effectively, reserving the right to punish those who tamper with or utilize the postal system unlawfully.
 - f. The power to declare war is reserved for Congress as well as funding of the military while the President's power is to wage war.
 - g. Congress acts under the authority that every sovereign nation possesses powers a-e.
 - h. Local governments (and by extension, the militias they maintain) are subject to federal oversight, as well as forts, arsenals, and other property the federal government requires.
 - i. Legislative power of Congress is made flexible by the Elastic Clause, giving it the right to do whatever is reasonable to execute its powers and allow other branches to execute their powers.
2. List the current leaders of the U.S. House and Senate.
 - a. Senate Majority: Mitch McConnell (R-KY)
 - b. President Pro Tempore: Orrin Hatch (R-UT)
 - c. Senate Minority: Chuck Schumer (D-NY)
 - d. Speaker of the House: Paul Ryan (R-WI)**
 - e. House Majority: Kevin McCarthy (R-CA)**
 - f. House Minority: Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)**
3. Which political party controls the House? **Republicans (R241-D194)**
4. Which political party controls the Senate? **Republicans (R51-D47-I2)**
5. Investigate the 10 most viewed current bills. Describe 3 of them and your thoughts on whether you believe the bills will actually become laws.

As of August 26th, 2018

- a. H.R.6157
 - i. Specifies appropriations for the Department of Defense for purposes of military activities for FY2019 while excluding military construction, family housing, civil works projects of Army Corps of Engineers, and nuclear warheads.

- ii. **My Thoughts:** The positives of this bill are that it leaves more controversial subjects to other bills while it appears to aim for the most necessary funding for the DoD. Looking through the text of the bill, there are of course areas that funding could possibly be transferred from to other areas such as R&D, and I of course have qualms regarding increasing the DoD budget further instead of just restructuring things to be more efficient.
- b. H.R.392
 - i. Eliminates per-country numerical limitation for employment-based immigrants and increases per-country numerical limitation for family-based immigrants from 7% to 15% of family-sponsored visas.
 - ii. **My Thoughts:** I like the idea of eliminating immigration quotas as it pertains to those immigrating for purposes of employment and instead focusing on merit of individuals. Restricting access on grounds of nationality despite proven merit and skill is unreasonable in my eyes, and a waste of a potential benefit for our country. Increasing per-country numerical limitations for family-based immigrants I can understand and see as being reasonable even if I am not totally in favor of it.
- c. H.R.38
 - i. This bill is intended to amend federal criminal code to allowed qualified individuals to carry a concealed handgun into another state that allows individuals to carry concealed firearms. Qualified individuals must already be eligible under federal law to possess and transport a firearm, have valid photo ID, and have a valid carry permit. These individuals would also be allowed to carry the concealed handgun on federally owned, public lands and are not subject to federal prohibition on possessing a firearm in a school zone.
 - ii. **My Thoughts:** While I like the idea of streamlining the process of transporting your concealed weapon between states that allow it, I'm wary of the language referring to allowing qualified individuals to carry their concealed weapon between states and onto any public, federal land, as well as being exempt from the prohibition on firearms in school zones. I can understand reasoning for most of the bill and support it, but the language pertaining to school zones should perhaps be omitted.