

Useful Information

United States Government ***The Legislative Branch***

The Legislative Branch makes the laws.

There are two parts to Congress.

THE SENATE

- 100 members
- Each state elects 2 senators
- Members serve a term of 6 years
- Votes on treaties with foreign nations
- Approves of top officials appointed by the President
- Led by the Vice-President of the U.S.

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

- 435 members
- Each state elects number depending on population
- Starts all laws about taxes
- Votes to impeach federal officials
- Elect their own officers
- Led by the speaker of the house

The Executive Branch

The Executive Branch carries out the laws.

THE PRESIDENT

- Chief of State-Serves as an example of America's beliefs and values
- Chief Executive-decides how laws are enforced: chooses Cabinet members and advisors to help him run the government
- Chief Diplomat-decides on foreign policy; directs Ambassadors
- Chief Legislator-influences Congress in its lawmaking by signing or vetoing bills
- Commander in Chief-in charge of U.S. armed forces: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines

THE PRESIDENT'S CABINET

- Sec. of State-guides foreign affairs
- Sec. of Defense-protects U.S. against war
- Secretary of the Treasury-manages country's finances
- Attorney General- heads Department of Justice which enforces laws
- Sec. of Commerce-responsible for business and trading activities
- Sec. of Agriculture-helps farmers with crops and livestock
- Sec. of the Interior-cares for national parks and natural resources
- Sec. of Housing/Urban Development-helps cities plan new construction
- Sec. of Transportation-runs Coast Guard, air traffic, highways
- Sec. of Labor-promotes the welfare of office and factory workers
- Sec. of Health and Human Services-directs medical and social programs
- Sec. of Energy-conserves and regulates energy sources
- Sec. of Education-provides grants and loans to students

The Judicial Branch

The Judicial Branch decides the meanings of the laws

THE SUPREME COURT

- Made up of 9 judges who are appointed by the President and serve for life
- Decides if laws are constitutional
- Settles arguments between the states and cases involving the government
- Guardian of all the rights of all Americans