



UNITED WAY OF FRANKLIN COUNTY
FCRN PUBLIC POLICY TASK FORCE

HOW IS THE US CONGRESS SET UP?

- The U.S. Congress consists of two bodies: the Senate and the House of Representatives.
- There are 100 Senate members, two from each of the 50 states.
- There are 435 House members with a varying number of members per state based on the state's population.
- Members of the Senate are elected to 6-year terms. One-third of the Senate seats (those that are expiring) and all 435 seats in the House of Representatives are open for election every two years.

ROLE OF THE SENATE

The Senate, aka the upper house or chamber is responsible for confirming nominees chosen by the President to serve as judges, ambassadors, cabinet officers, and senior executives. The Senate negotiates and ratifies treaties with foreign nations. The Senate also reviews, debates, and modifies legislation sent by the House.

ROLE OF THE HOUSE

The House, aka the lower chamber, originates all revenue (tax) bills and, through historical precedent, this authority has been extended to all appropriations (spending) bills as well. Although these money bills must begin in the House, the Senate has full opportunity to debate and modify the legislation sent to it by the House and, as with all bills, both chambers must pass a bill before it can be sent to the President.