

United States Constitution Article I: The Legislative Branch (Congress)

Task 1: Constituency Research

- Define *constituency*.

- Which state and district do you represent? Who are those people you represent? Find out more by completing the “**Constituency Research Form.**”



Task 2: Guidelines for Drafting Legislation

List the issues that affect your district.

- a) Brainstorm a list of issues facing the community you serve. Generate many ideas and record them on a piece of paper. (That is, if you serve an urban population, you may have issues such as crime control, gangs, and public services; if you serve rural areas, you may have issues such as services, agriculture, and small schools.)
- b) SHARE your issues with people of your committee. Which ones are the same? Which ones are different?
- c) Looking at your list of problems that face your district, answer the following questions:
 - Which issue is the NUMBER ONE priority for my constituents (i.e., what is the current priority need of the people I serve?)
 - What creative solution could I come up with for the issue?
 - What bill could I propose that would help my district with this issue?
 - Is this bill good for my reelection strategy? Can I sell it in my district?
 - What might be some of the criticisms of the bill?
- d) Use the space below to list your ideas for a bill you might write. What might be two positive consequences of each idea? What might be two negative consequences?

Idea #1:

Positive Consequences:

Negative Consequences:

Idea #2:

Positive Consequences:

Negative Consequences:

e) Which of the ideas above is most appealing to you? Explain why you like this idea and how you might be able to eliminate the negative consequences of a bill like this.

Draft the bill.

a) Use the **template** provided from the US House of Representatives to format legislation.

Please also be aware of the following rules:

- All bills must have a name. The name you use can be creative.
- All bills must contain a title, purpose, and eligibility. Other features of bills such as administration and authorization may be included if needed.
- The text of a bill is numbered to make it easier to follow along when one member of the House is negotiating with another member.

b) Use these **guiding questions** as you draft your bill:

How will this bill help my constituents?

How will this bill help others' constituents? (How can I sell it?)

How will this bill support my party?

How will this bill be funded?

What issues do you anticipate your opponents may have with the bill?