Major Acts of Congress
(focus on essential Acts for EOC, but also significant for AP)

Civil War Era
Homestead Act (1862, Civil War, Lincoln)- allowed American citizens who had never fought against the U.S. to claim 160 acres of public land in the West, helped settle and enclose the West

Pacific Railway Act (1862, Civil War, Lincoln)- provided government subsidies to enable building of the transcontinental railroad; aided in Northern economic expansion and movement westward as well as further encroachment onto Indian lands

Gilded Age
Chinese Exclusion Act (Gilded Age) - banned Chinese immigration, both skilled and unskilled, in response to low wages and high unemployment in California; increased racial discrimination against Asians

Dawes Act (Gilded Age - Government policy to break up tribal lands and give land to individuals in an attempt to assimilate Native Americans

Pendleton Act-Civil Service Reform (Gilded Age, 1883) To eliminate patronage, civil service exams were given so candidates had to earn position based on merit and their qualifications

Interstate Commerce Act (Gilded Age, 1887)- began government regulations of railroads; set up the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC); the first time the government regulated business, major turning point

Sherman Anti-Trust Act (1890)- gave the government limited power to prosecute any corporation that attempted to restrain interstate or foreign trade by establishing a monopoly, trust, or holding company

Progressive Era
Pure Food and Drug Act (1906, Progressive Era, Teddy)- began consumer protection role of government, imposed restrictions on businesses that produce prepared foods and patented medicines - labeling and branding food and medicine

Federal Reserve Act (1913, Progressive Era, Wilson)- re-established government role in being the nation's central banker; set up 12 districts with 12 Federal Reserve Banks to control currency

Clayton Antitrust Act (1914, Progressive Era, Wilson)- strengthened the earlier Sherman law by spelling out and prohibiting certain specific anti-competitive business practices, as well as eliminating language that was used against labor; increased government's role in preventing unfair business practices

National Park Act of 1916 (Progressive Era, Wilson)- created government agency to protect, promote, and regulate use of national parks and monuments (most of which were set up by Teddy)

Major Acts of Congress
(focus on essential Acts for EOC, but also significant for AP)

Roaring Twenties
National Origins Acts (Quotas, 1920s)- limited immigration to 3% then 2% of early census numbers; targeting groups from Southern and Eastern Europe and Asia

American Indian Citizenship Act 1924 -Granted immediate citizenship to all Native American Indians born in the United States; reversed Dawes policy requiring Indians gave up tribal ownership in order to become a citizen

Great Depression and WWII
Banking Act- created the **FDIC** insuring deposits and increasing trust in banking system following a panic and bankruptcy of thousands of banks in the Great Depression

Social Security Act (Great Depression, 1934, FDR)- provided old age pensions for workers over the age of 65; reduced workforce and increased role of government as the beginning of the limited welfare state

Lend Lease Act (1940)- FDR proposed to sell, lease, or lend war materials to "any country whose defense the President deems vital to the defense of the US"

Servicemen's Readjustment Act-GI Bill (1944, WWII, FDR)- Benefits for veterans of World War II that included low-cost mortgages, low-interest loans, cash payments to attend college, one year of unemployment

Cold War
Economic Cooperation Act of 1948 (Marshall Plan, Cold War, Truman)- provided financial support for rebuilding West Germany and 15 other Western European nations after WWII as well as economic aid to China, Greece, and Turkey; intended to create strong allies in Cold War

Interstate Highway Act (1956, Eisenhower)- built extensive highway system crisscrossing country; huge infrastructure program that increased mobility, trade, and provided Cold War defense by setting up system of make-shift air strips should the nation be invaded; partially responsible for decline of railroad and increase of automotive and truck transport

Civil Rights Act 1957 (Eisenhower, Republican) Passed to increase African American voting in the south by giving federal courts the power to register African Americans ; set a pattern for later acts

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Major Acts of Congress
(focus on essential Acts for EOC, but also significant for AP)

Reagan Era and Modern Times
Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1886- made it illegal for employers knowingly to hire undocumented immigrants; increased border patrol staff along Mexican border, granted citizenship to many illegals already here (amnesty)

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Reagan Era, George H.W. Bush)- created laws requiring "accommodation" like parking spaces and ramps to enable disabled people to work and operate without je facto discrimination through lack of access

Patriot Act -Allowed law enforcement officials and intelligence agencies the power to conduct sweeping searches and surveillance, detain immigrants, and monitor bank accounts; passed in response to 9-11 attacks

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act 2009- $700 billion bailout package to create new jobs, save existing ones, spur economic activity, and invest in long-term infrastructure development, some would be spent directly by the federal government and other funds were supplied to state governments

Affordable Care Act (Obamacare)-set up exchange to provide healthcare to everyone

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Major Acts of Congress
(focus on essential Acts for EOC, but also significant for AP)

Great Society – 1960s
Civil Rights Act 1964 (LBJ, Democrat)- Prohibited discrimination based on race, color, religion or ethnic origin in hotels, restaurants, and all places of employment doing business with federal government or engaged in interstate commerce

Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (1964)- Congress voted to give Johnson full military powers to stop North Vietnam's aggression after the gulf of Tonkin incident

Voting Rights Act 1965- Ended literacy tests, made it much more difficult for the 9 Southern states most guilty of denying Blacks the right to vote

Immigration and Nationality Act Amendments of 1965 (Great Society, LBJ)- abolished quota systems of the 20s and switched to a system which focused on skill level and family relationships with U.S.. citizens; spurred diversity of the U.S. with nearly 1/3 of U.S. population by 1990 consisting of immigrants

Medicare and Medicaid Act of 1965 (Great Society, LBJ)- provided hospital insurance and medical insurance for those over 65 on Social Security

Title XIX of The Social Security Act Amendments 1965 (LBJ)- expanded Social Security program

Later Cold War
Title IX of the Educational Acts Amendments of 1972- major step in equalizing opportunities and resulted in increase in numbers of women in athletics in high school and college through equalizing funding

EPA -Sets and enforces air and water pollution standards for cities **-** authorized the EPA to regulate emissions of hazardous air pollutants

War Powers Act (1973)- Limited Presidential power in a conflict without a formal declaration of war from Congress, President has to inform congress within 48 hours of sending troops and Congress has 60 days to approve or President will have to withdraw troops

Clean Air Act (1970)- –government regulations dealing with increased smog

Endangered Species Act (1973)- gave government the power the protect certain species in danger of extinction as well as protect ecosystems upon which they depend; addressing environmental impact of growing human population

Reinvestment Act 1977- Required banks to make credit available in poor communities, preventing the decay of low-income neighborhoods in inner cities