

# A LESSON IN CIVICS

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WHAT DOES GOVERNMENT LOOK LIKE AT THE LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL LEVEL?

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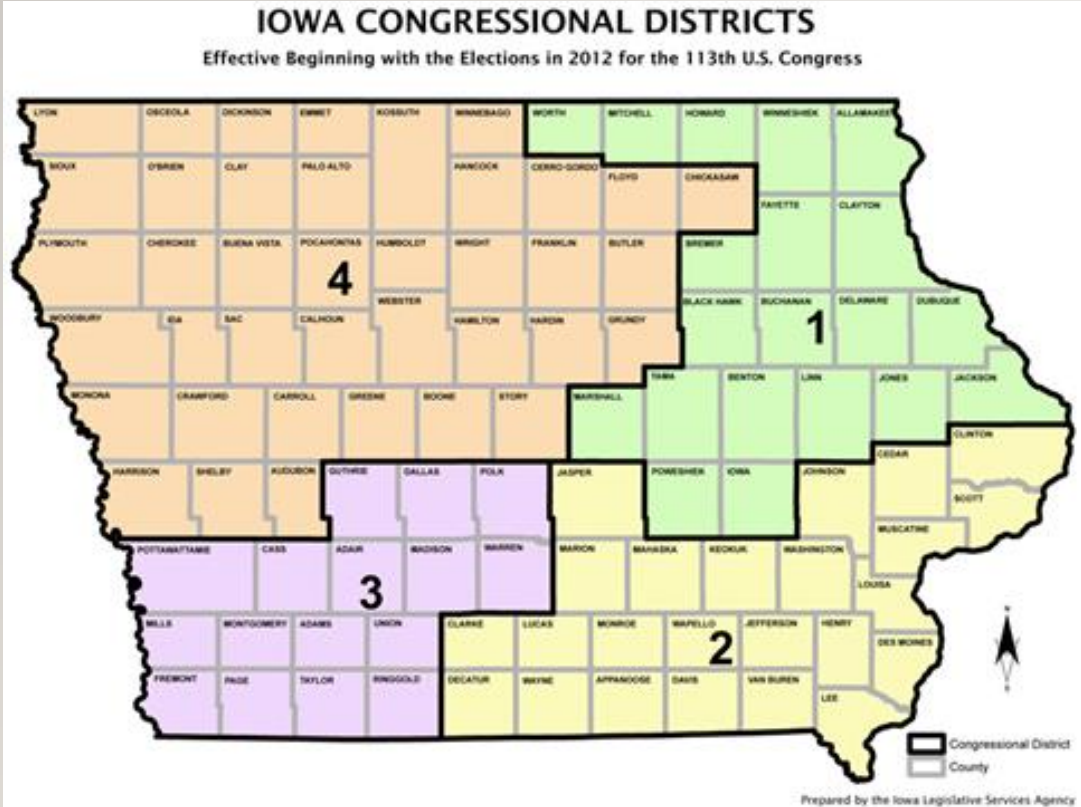


# FEDERAL LEGISLATURE – U.S. HOUSE OF CONGRESS

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- House of Representatives
  - 435 members to equally represent the states based on population
  - Republicans have the majority
- Senate
  - 100 members, 2 from each state
    - Republicans have the majority
- Year round position and have more frequent breaks between sessions

# US HOUSE DISTRICTS - IOWA



No map for the US Senate districts because they represent the entire state when they are in Washington DC



# MEET YOUR REPS AND SENATORS!

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- <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find/>
- <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members>
- <https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials>
- <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find>



# STATE GOVERNMENT

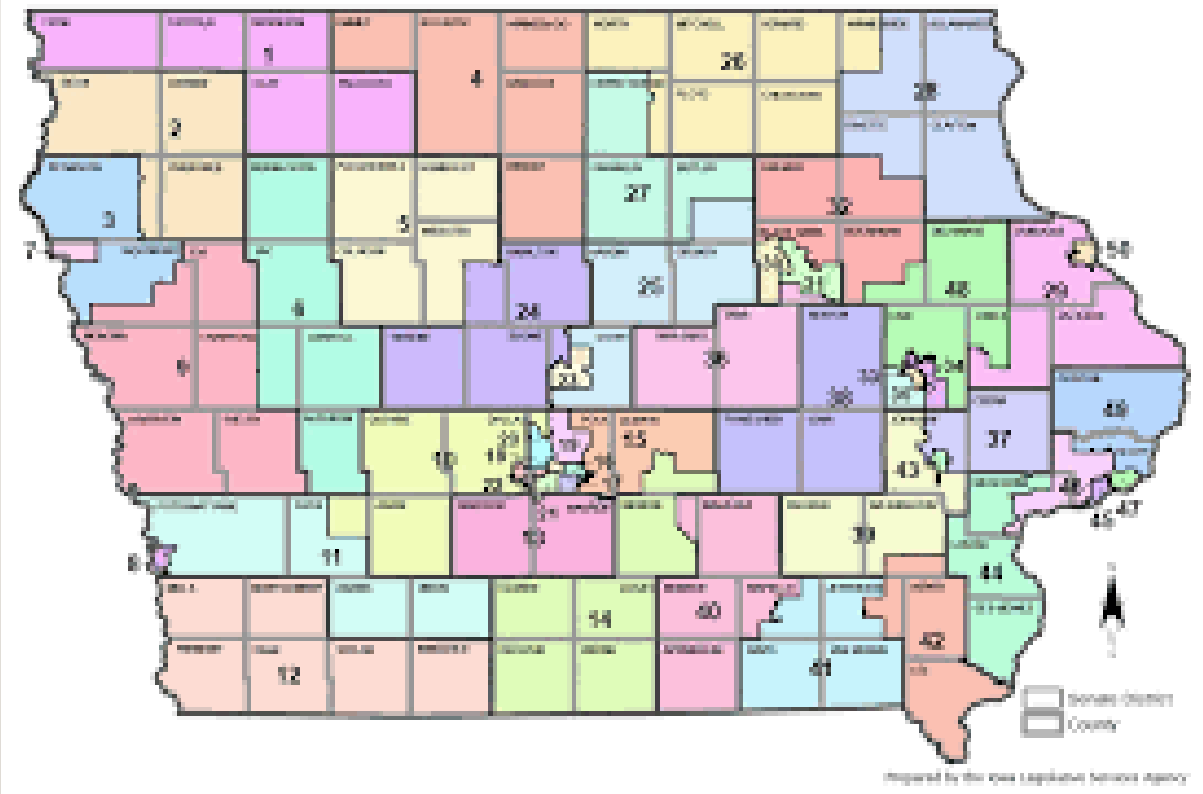
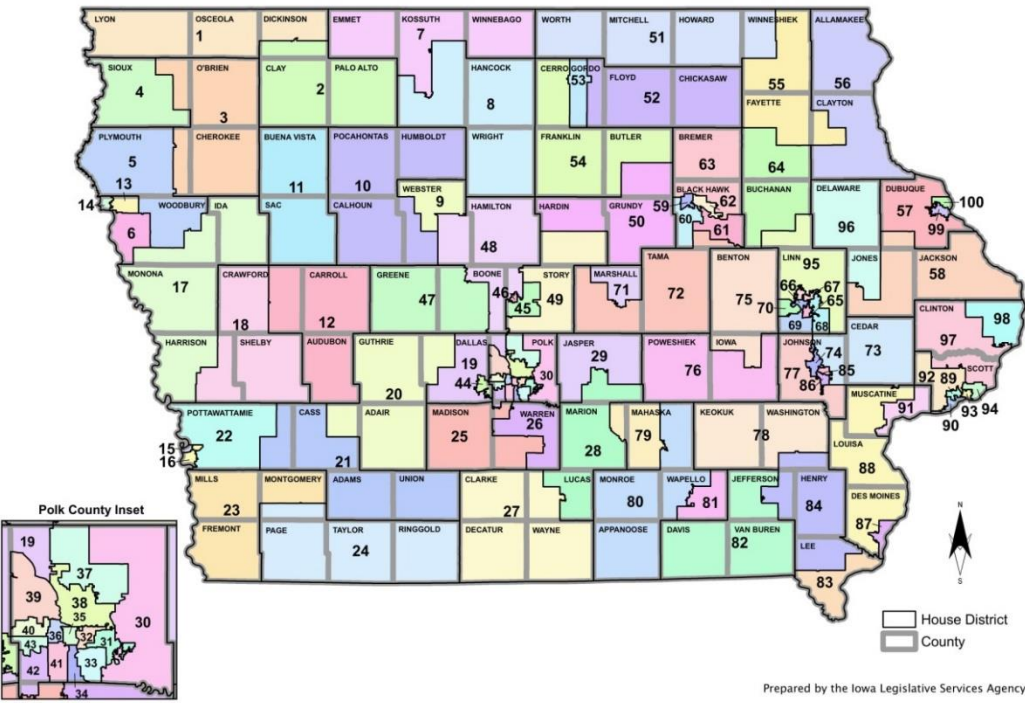
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- We have a bicameral legislature (House & Senate) "Iowa General Assembly"
- 50 Senators & 100 House Representatives
  - Each Senator and State Rep have their own district
- Each Senate District has two House Districts
  - Example: Iowa Senate District 35 House District 69/70

# IOWA HOUSE AND SENATE DISTRICTS

## IOWA HOUSE DISTRICTS

Effective Beginning with the Elections in 2012 for the 85th General Assembly





# QUALIFICATIONS FOR STATE OFFICE

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- Qualifications and Terms of Office A person may seek the office of State Senator if the person:
  - Is at least 25 years of age and a citizen of the US and has resided in Iowa for at least one year prior to election;
  - Has resided for at least 60 days in the district from which the person is chosen at the time of election.
  - State Senators **serve four-year terms.**
- A person may seek the office of State Representative if the person:
  - Is at least 21 years of age and a citizen of the United States of America and has resided in Iowa for at least one year prior to election.
  - Has resided for at least 60 days in the district from which the person is chosen at the time of election. **State Representatives serve two-year terms**

# BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

- There are 180 boards and commissions that need appointments
  - <https://openup.iowa.gov/>

## List of Iowa Boards and Commissions

Board Name	Department	Openings
<b>A</b>		
Accountancy Examining Board	Commerce, Department of	0 of 8 Open
Adult and Juvenile Offenders, Interstate Compact Council for	Corrections, Department of	0 of 2 Open
African Americans, Commission on the Status of	Human Rights, Department of	1 of 7 Open
Aging, Commission On	Aging, Department on	0 of 7 Open
Agricultural Development Board	Iowa Finance Authority	0 of 5 Open
Agricultural Education, Council on	Education, Department of	0 of 9 Open
Alcoholic Beverages Commission	Commerce, Department of	0 of 5 Open
Architectural Examining Board	Commerce, Department of	1 of 7 Open
Armory Board	Public Defense, Department of	0 of 6 Open
Arts Council, Iowa	Cultural Affairs, Department of	0 of 15 Open
Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs, Commission of	Human Rights, Department of	2 of 7 Open
Athletic Training, Board of	Public Health, Department of	2 of 7 Open
Autism Council, Iowa	Education, Department of	1 of 13 Open
<b>B</b>		
Banking Council, State	Commerce, Department of	0 of 6 Open
Barbering, Board of	Public Health, Department of	0 of 5 Open
Behavioral Science, Board of	Public Health, Department of	0 of 9 Open
Blind, Commission for the	Blind, Department for the	0 of 3 Open
Boiler and Pressure Vessel Board	Workforce Development, Iowa	1 of 8 Open
Borlaug Statue Committee, Dr. Norman E.	Cultural Affairs, Department of	0 of 7 Open
Brain Injuries, Advisory Council on	Public Health, Department of	2 of 15 Open
Building Code Advisory Council, State	Public Safety, Department of	0 of 7 Open
<b>C</b>		
Capital Investment Board, Iowa	Revenue, Department of	0 of 5 Open
Capitol Planning Commission	Administrative Services, Department of (DAS)	1 of 6 Open



# LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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- "All politics is local"
- What type of format does your city/town have? Council/Manager? Council/Mayor?
  - Many city/town boards and commissions
- School Board....this is where you can have a HUGE difference!
- County Government....Supervisors....3-5 supervisors per county
- SHOW UP!
- Visit your county website to find more information
  - <http://www.linncounty.org/27/Government>

# HOW TO CREATE RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR REPS

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- Connect with them through social media, email, phone call, or letter
- Set a time to meet with them at an event or as an individual in a 1:1 meeting
  - Have a concise plan of what you want to speak about and seize the opportunity!
- Follow up with them after the meeting
  - Thank them for their time
  - Follow up on their tasks

Connect



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graph TD; A[Connect] --> B[Meet]; B --> C[Follow Up];
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Meet

Follow Up

# SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITES

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- Take a few minutes and find your representatives (Iowa and US) on social media platforms and find their website with their contact information.





# EMAIL AND LETTER EXAMPLES

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## KEEP YOUR LETTER SIMPLE

- Your letter will be more effective if you address a single topic or issue rather than a variety of issues you may feel passionate about. Typed, one-page letters are best. Many Political Action Committees (PACs) recommend a three-paragraph letter structured like this:
- Say why you are writing and who you are. List your "credentials" and state that you are a constituent. It also doesn't hurt to mention if you voted for or donated to them. If you want a response, you must include your name and address, even when using email.
- Provide more detail. Be factual and not emotional. Provide specific rather than general information about how the topic affects you and others. If a certain bill is involved, cite the correct title or number whenever possible.
- Close by requesting the action you want to be taken. It might be a vote for or against a bill, a change in general policy, or some other action, but be specific.
- The best letters are courteous, to the point, and include specific supporting examples.

<https://www.thoughtco.com/write-effective-letters-to-congress-3322301>



# NEXT STEPS

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- Make a specific list of what you would like to talk to your rep about
  - Consult experts in the field to provide data and examples
- Send a letter or email with your questions and concerns
  - You may not get a response the first time
  - The more local the rep the easier they are to get in touch with
- Make contact with your rep to set up a time to talk
  - Be persistent! 😊 😊 😊

# HOW TO MAINTAIN YOUR RELATIONSHIP

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## IN PERSON

- Local events
  - Fundraisers, galas, running races
- Local meetings
  - County political party meetings, special interest groups
- Set up a meeting
  - Coffee shop
  - Library

## NOT IN PERSON

- Email
- Social Media
  - Google or go on Facebook and find groups that support the health initiatives you are interested in
- Letters
- Phone Calls
- Keep at it!



# QUESTIONS?

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