

All information

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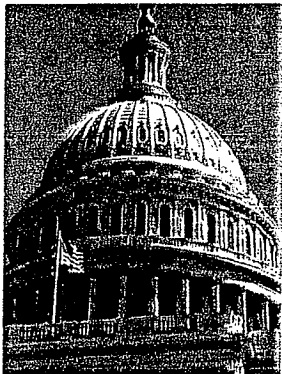
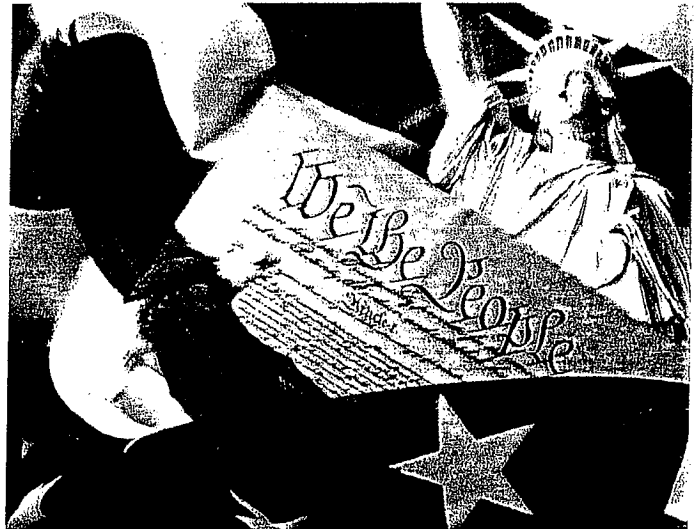
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Legislative News

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National Legislature: A Look at the Beginning

The Constitution established a bicameral legislature, made up of two houses, for historical, practical, and theoretical reasons. The British Parliament had consisted of two houses since the 1300's and the Framers knew the British system of bicameralism well. They knew it worked in Britain, so they wanted to try it themselves. The Framers also used this type of legislation for practical reasons. They developed a system where each of the States is equally represented in the Senate and represented proportional to its population in the House. The last reason that they developed this legislature is theoretical. The Framers liked a bicameral Congress because one house might act as a check on the other. They thought bicameralism would diffuse the power of Congress and prevent it from overwhelming the other two branches of government. The Framers started a well-organized government, since we are still using it today!



The House of Representatives:

The Legislative Branch is made up of The House of Representatives and The Senate. The House of Representatives has 435 members, divided among the 50 states according to their population. To be a member of the house you must be 25 years old, a U.S. citizen for at least seven years, and a resident of the state you represent. The members are elected every two years and they have the power to initiate revenue bills, impeach federal officials, and elect the President in the case of an electoral college tie.

The Senate:

The other part of the Legislative Branch, The Senate, is made up of 100 members, two for each state. Senators are elected to six-year terms by the people of each state. The Vice President of the United States serves as President of the Senate and has the power to cast the decisive vote in the event of a tie in the Senate. The Senate has the power to confirm those of the President's appointments that require consent, and to ratify treaties. The Senate also has the power to try impeachment cases for federal officials referred to it by the House.

Tom Harkin

Iowa Democrat Tom Harkin has a bill pending in the Senate that would require 90 percent of all vehicles to run on a blend of mostly ethanol by the 2016 model year. That proposal would be bad for auto makers and bad for the economy. Harkin's bill would impose a new cost of \$2 billion to make all vehicles flex-fuel ready to accept a mostly ethanol-based fuel- plus the costs of changing all the gas stations. It seems the only purpose for this is a demand for Iowa corn. Ethanol is not as efficient in moving vehicles as gasoline and its use of corn drives up food prices.



Chuck Grassley

Chuck Grassley announced that the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration has awarded grants totaling \$146,915 to airports in Fairfield and Mason City, Iowa. The funding is intended to increase the safety and efficiency of these airports. Fairfield Municipal Airport will receive \$31,050 for runway rehabilitation, while Mason City Municipal Airport will receive \$115,865 for apron rehabilitation.

