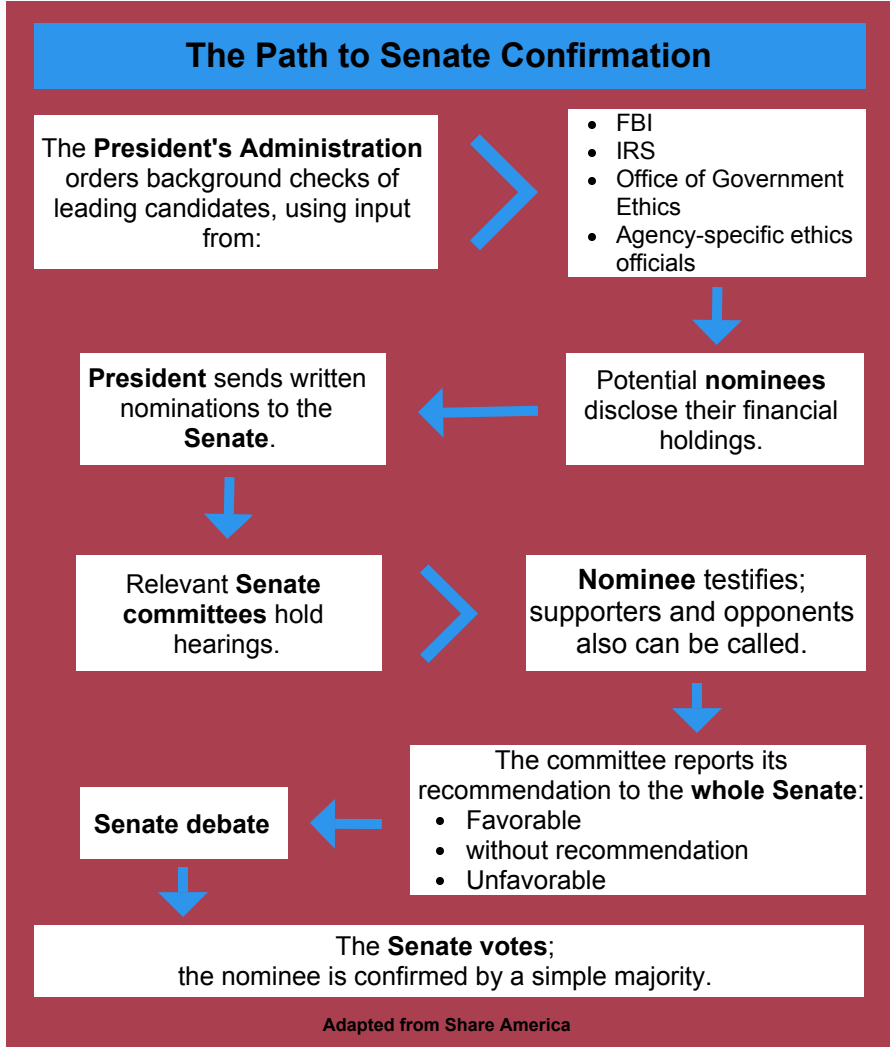


***Civics is all around us. There is a lot to know about the government and how “We the People” interact with the government and each other. Let’s help each other expand our civic literacy.***

Even in times of crisis, as we face now with the COVID-19/Novel coronavirus pandemic, the Constitution lives on and civic life moves forward. This includes the president working to fill **vacant positions** in the executive branch.

According to **Article II**, Section 2 of the United States Constitution, the president has the power to “...nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States...”



*This infographic illustrates the appointment process from nomination through approval (or rejection).*

There are currently 15 **Cabinet level** executive departments, other agencies, and sub-departments under the authority of the president. The leadership of each of these departments is formally nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate. Senate confirmation provides a **check on the power** of the executive branch.

When positions become vacant and the Senate is unable to immediately confirm the successor, Presidents may also appoint people to fill positions for a **temporary term** for a period of up to 210 days. These positions are referred to as ‘acting’ or interim roles. President Trump, for example, has had 22 ‘acting’ leaders. Ultimately, however, the Constitution has been interpreted through law to require that these acting department heads must be confirmed by the Senate if they are going to continue in the position. This maintains the checks and balances of government power built into the Constitution, and ensures a level of consensus between the president and U.S. Senate on who leads executive agencies.

**To Do and To Think:** Look at the Appointment Process graphic. What stands out to you about the process? Which step do you think might cause the nominee the most difficulty and why? What questions do you have?

**Learn MORE** about the nomination process. Free registration may be required.

- [The Cabinet of President Donald Trump](#), from The White House
- [Articles I, II and III](#), from Civics360.org
- [Nominations](#), from the U.S. Senate

