

Legislative Branch

- **Committees in Congress allow for deliberation and debate with a reduced number of members rather than all of the members of either house debating every bill.**

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- **The committee system also reflects the notion that members need to spend time on issues important to their district in order to serve their constituents well.**

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- In their deliberations, committees hold hearings, conduct research, and write policy. Special interest groups often testify during these hearings in their efforts to shape legislation as it is being written. Some bills are not forwarded to the full house for a vote as the committee may recommend that a bill not receive further consideration. In other cases, the committee votes favorably on the bill and it is forwarded to the full house for a vote.

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- There are five different types of committees; listed below are three.
 - i. Standing - Permanent legislative panels that consider bills and issues, Members of one house, and both parties
 - ii. Special - Performs a special function beyond the authority or capacity of a standing committee; Members of one house, and one party
 - iii. Conference - Temporary committee formed to reconcile differences in legislation passed by both chambers; Members of the House of Representatives and the Senate

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- The majority party in each house determines committee selection. They determine the amount of members from each party and new Representatives and Senators are assigned to committees based on the available spaces.