United States of America Government & Constitution

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Early American History

1607: Colonists land in Jamestown

1619: African Blacks brought to Jamestown, beginning of Slavery in the Virginia colony

1636: First University founded in colonies (Harvard College)

1773: Boston Tea Party

1775-83: Revolutionary War (American War of Independence)

1776: July 4th, Declaration of Independence is signed

1788: Constitution is Ratified

1789: George Washington is inaugurated as the first President







Declaration of Independence

- Written by Thomas Jefferson (future President)
- Signed on July 4th, 1776
- The ultimate break up letter
 - "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."
- 13 Colonies were already at war with Great Britain, but said that they were now officially independent
 - New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia

In CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

A DECLARATION

By the REPRESENTATIVES of the

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

IN GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED.

and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent Respect to the Opinions of

We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created tights, must among these are true, Lorentze to the content of the Governed, that

Iten, deriving their jult Powers from the Confent of the Governed, that

For taking away our Chriters, abolifishing our most valuable Laws, ten, dering interpart course from the Common definetive of these Ends.

Stating fundamentally the Forms of our Covernments:

It is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to inflitute new

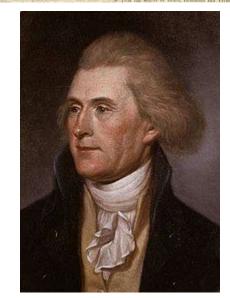
For fulprending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invoked long ettablished frauda not be commended to the commended of the commended to forfier, while levils are fufferable, than to sight themselves by the latest of our People.

How is this Time, transporting large Armies of foreign Meters.

For quartering large Bodies of armed Troops among us: For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from Punishment for any Mur-

For cutting off our Trade with all Parts of the World :

Domers in Juch Form, as to them finall from most likely to effect their He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protestion



From 13 to 50 States



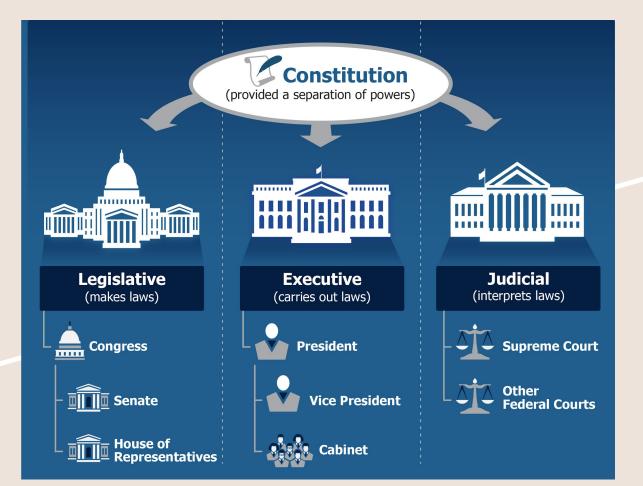
Constitution

- Oldest constitution still in use in the world
- Written by the Founding Fathers
 - George Washington, Benjamin Franklin,
 Alexander Hamilton, James Madison
- Explains the basic rights of citizens and the organization of the new government
 - 7 Articles
 - 27 Amendments
 - First 10 are known as the **Bill of Rights**
- Signed on September 17, 1787
- Ratified on June 22, 1788





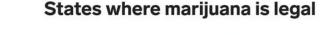
Branches of Government = Checks and Balances

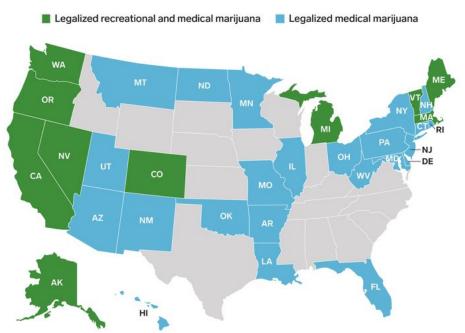


Federal versus State Powers

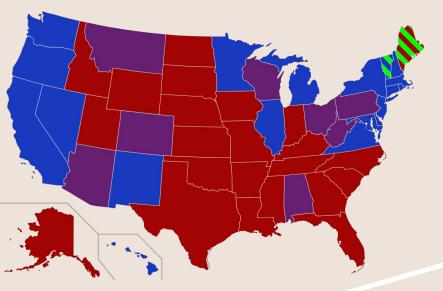
- Constitution divided Federal and State
 Government
- Each State has their own government with their own constitution
- The Constitution describes what the Federal
 Government is allowed to do -- everything else is

 left for the states to decide
- The Federal Government decides disputes
 between states
- Examples:
 - Marijuana





Equal and Proportional Representation



Senate

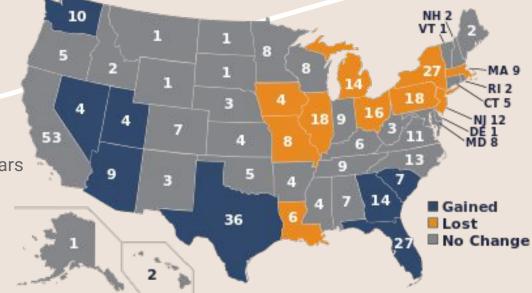
Each state elects 2 Senators (100 total) every 6 years

- Red: 2 Republican
- Blue: 2 Democrat
- Purple: 1 Republican, 1 Democrat
- Green stripes: Independent

House of Representatives

Number based on State Population

- Determined by Census (every 10 years)
- Total of 435
- Elected every 2 years
- Will change in 2020





- Sign or veto legislation
- Command the armed forces
- Ask for the opinion of the Cabinet

- Convene or adjourn Congress
- Grant pardons
- Receive ambassadors

Executive Powers

Judicial Powers

Supreme Court

- 9 Justices who serve for life
- Appointed by current President,
 confirmed by Congress
- Can declare laws unconstitutional
- Example:
 - Gay Marriage
 - On June 26, 2015, SCOTUS
 legalized same-sex marriage in
 all 50 states

