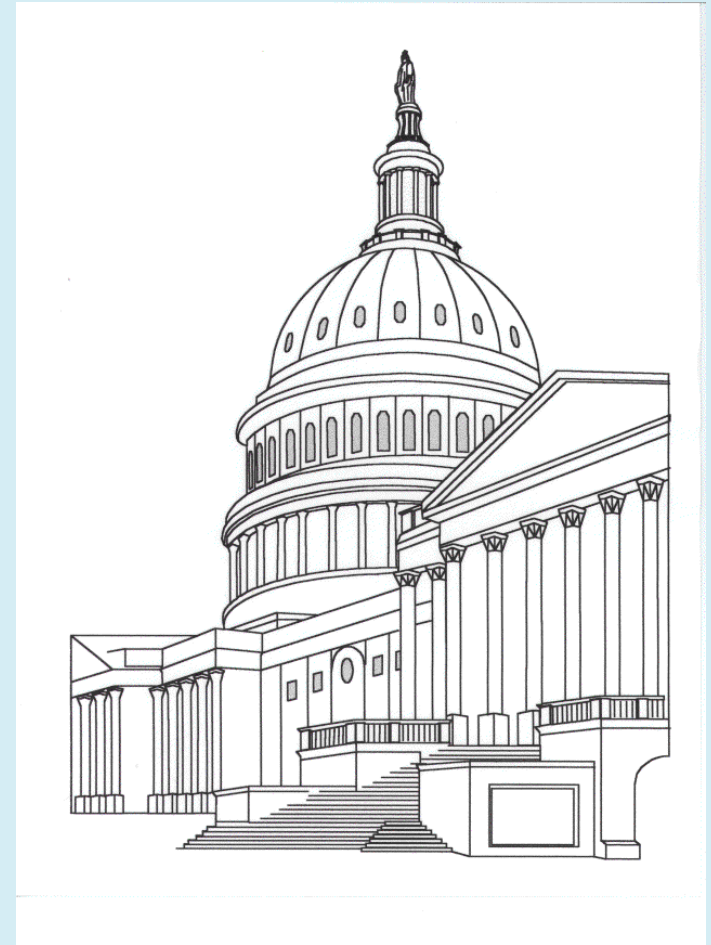


Introduction to Your Federal Government

Minnesota Partners in
Policymaking
April 18, 2020



Federal Legislative Process

- Government Overview
- How a bill becomes a law
- Budgeting
- Appropriations
- Working with Staff

US Government & Public Policy

- Executive Branch

President, Cabinet, Agencies, Boards & Commission

- Legislative Branch

Senate and House of Representatives

Vice President, Speaker of the House

- Judicial Branch

Chief Justice and Associate Justices

Executive Branch

- Headed by the President of the United States
- Implements and enforces Laws
- All of the Departments that spend taxpayer money are in this branch

Legislative Branch-Congress

- Senate

100 Members

2 per state

- House of Representatives

435 Members

Resident Delegate, Commissioners

Allocated based on population at each census;
reallocation and redistricting occurred in 2011 based
upon results of the 2010 census.

Judicial Branch

- Supreme Court
9 Members
- Courts of Appeals
- District Courts
- Special Courts

116th Congress, 2nd Session

- **Senate** - 53 Republicans
 - 45 Democrats; 2 Independents
 - 26 women*** (20 D and 5 R)
 - 5 Latino; 3 African American; 3 Asian American; 1 Multiracial (2LGBTQ)
 - Average age: 62.9 years
- **House** - 236 Democrats
 - 198 Republicans & 1 Independent
 - 102 women*** (79 D and 23 R)
 - 43 Latino; 53 African American;
 - 14 Asian American/ Pacific Islander;
 - 4 Native American;
 - Average age: 57.6 years

Why Majority is Important:

- Agenda setting (Floor, committees)
- Determines schedules (Hearings, mark ups, floor votes)
- Oversight
- Committee Ratios/Staff/Budget
- Office Space
- 60 votes required for cloture in Senate (but has been amended for Judges and can be waived in Budget Reconciliation Rules)

Senate Leadership

- Republicans Majority
 - Mike Pence (IN), President
 - Mitch McConnell (KY)–Majority Leader
 - Chuck Grassley (IA)– Pres. Pro Temp.
 - John Thune (S.D.) – Majority Whip
 - Roy Blount (OK) – Rep. Conf. Chair
- Democratic Minority
 - Charles Schumer (NY) – Min. Leader
 - Richard J. Durbin (IL) – Minority Whip
 - Patty Murray (WA) – Assistant Leader
 - Debbie Stabenow (MI) Policy Chair

House Leadership

- Democrat Majority
 - Nancy Pelosi (CA) – Speaker
 - Steny H. Hoyer (MD) – Majority Whip
 - James Clyburn (S.C.) – Asst. Maj. Whip
 - Ben Ray Lujan (N.M.) – Asst. Leader
 - Hakeem Jeffries (N.Y.) - Caucus Chair

- Republicans Minority
 - Kevin McCarthy (CA) – Minority Leader
 - Steve Scalise (LA)– Minority Whip
 - Liz Cheney (WY) – Conf. Chair
 - Mark Walker (N.C.) – Conf. Vice Chair

Key Committee Chairs and Ranking Members

SENATE

HELP

Alexander (LA);
Murray (WA) **Smith (MN)**

Appropriations

Shelby (AL);
Leahy (VT)

Budget

Enzi (WY);
Sanders (VT)

Finance

Grassley (IA);
Wyden (OR)

Banking, Housing, Urban Affairs

Crapo (ID);
Brown (OH) **Smith (MN)**

Judiciary

Graham (S.C.);
Feinstein (CA) **Klobuchar (MN)**

HOUSE

Education & Labor

Scott (VA); **Omar (MN)**
Foxx(N.C.)

Appropriations

Lowey (N.Y.); **McCollum (MN)**
Granger (TX)

Budget

Yarmuth (KY); **Omar (MN)**
Womack (AR)

Ways & Means

Neal (MA);
Brady (TX)

Energy & Commerce

Pallone, Jr. (N.J.);
Walden (OR); **Phillips (MN)**

Financial Services

Waters (CA);
McHenry (N.C.); **Emmer (MN)**

Judiciary

Nadler (N.Y.);
Jordan OH);

Minnesota Population; 2010 Census (5,303,925 million in 2010)

U. S. Senators

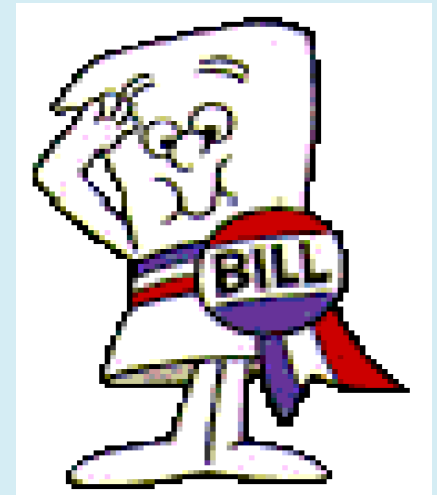
- Amy Klobuchar (D-FL): 3rd term;
Judiciary; Commerce, Science &
Transportation; Rules; Agriculture,
Nutrition & Forestry; Joint Economic
Comm.; J.C. on Printing; J.C. on Library
- Tina Smith (D-FL): 1st full term; HELP;
Banking, Housing & Urban Affairs;
Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry; Indian
Affairs; Jt. Select Comm. on Solvency of
Multiemployer Pension Plans

Minnesota's Representatives

- Districts = 662,991 people
 1. Jim Hagedorn (R); 1st term; Agriculture; Small Business
 2. Angie Craig (D); 1st term; Small Business;
Transportation & Infrastructure;
 3. Dean Phillips (DFL) 1st term; **Financial Services;** F.A;
 4. Betty McCollum (DFL); 10th term; **Appropriations;**
 5. Ilhan Omar (DFL); 1st term; **Education & Labor;**
Budget; Foreign Affairs;
 6. Tom Emmer (R); 3rd term; **Financial Services;**
 7. Collin Peterson (DFL); 15th term; Chairman, Agriculture;
Veterans' Affairs;
 8. Pete Stauber; (R)1st term; **Transportation &**
Infrastructure; Small Business;

How a bill becomes law

- Introduced by Member of Congress
- Sent to Committee/Subcommittee
- Hearings and markups held
- House or Senate debates
- Conference Committee meets
- House and Senate approve compromise
- President signs into law



Difference in Styles

- Senate

- Deliberative and consensus Driven

- Unlimited Debate

- 60 votes required for cloture

- Confirmation of cabinet, judges, etc.

- House

- “Efficient” and Rules Driven

- Limited Debate

Policymaking Process

- Congress does most of its work in committee
- Hearing(s) for discussion/testimony
- Markup
 - When the committee or subcommittee works on a bill

Senate Committee Structure

- Senate
20 Committees
- Joint Committees
4 Committees

Economic, Library, Printing, Taxation

Senate Committees for Disability Policy

- Senate Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services and Education Appropriations:
 - Funding for IDEA, employment, vocational rehabilitation, DD Act, HRSA, ODEP, Tech Act; many other programs
- Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing & Urban Development & Related Agencies
 - Funding for HUD Section 8 and 811 housing programs; transportation programs

Senate Committees for Disability Policy-2

- Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
 - HUD Section 8 and section 811 supportive housing for persons with disabilities; mass transit
- Senate Committee on Finance
 - Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, Taxes

Senate Committees for Disability Policy-3

- Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions (HELP)
 - IDEA, Vocational Rehabilitation, Health Care, DD Act, SAMHSA, MCHB, ADA..
- Senate Committee on the Judiciary
 - Civil Rights; Federal Judge Confirmation
- Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
 - Transportation, aviation, consumer product regulations; small business
- Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs

House Committee Structure

- House of Representatives
21 committees

House Committees for Disability Policy

- House Appropriations Committee
 - Subcommittee on Labor, HHS & Education; same as Senate
 - Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing & Urban Development and Related Agencies; same as Senate
- House Committee on Education & Labor
 - IDEA, V.R., Employment, Tech Act

House Committees for Disability Policy-2

- House Committee on Energy & Commerce
 - Medicaid, DD Act
- House Committee on Financial Services
 - HUD Section 8 and Section 811
- House Committee on Ways & Means
 - Social Security, SSI, Medicare, Taxes

House Committees for Disability Policy-3

- House Committee on the Judiciary;
Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
 - ADA, hate crimes and other civil rights
- House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
 - mass transit, aviation, etc.

Budget Process = Making the Pie



Congressional Budget Process:

An Overview

- Budget Resolution is an agreement between the House and Senate on the budget for at least the following four years.
- It is NOT signed by the President.
- It provides the *framework* for legislative action, including:
 - Annual appropriations (spending)
 - Revenue measures (taxes)
 - Reconciliation (programmatic changes)
 - Debt-limit legislation
 - Other Budget Measures

Timelines of Congressional Budget Process (the way it is supposed to be.....)

- First Monday in February: President submits budget to Congress
- Six weeks later: Committees submit views and estimates to Budget Committees
- April 1: Senate Budget Committee reports budget resolution
- April 15: Congress completes action on budget resolution
- May 15: Annual approps. bills may be considered in the House, even if action on budget resolution has not been completed

Timeline of Congressional Budget Process, cont.

- **June 10:** House Appropriations Committee reports last annual appropriations bill.
- **June 15:** House completes action on reconciliation legislation (if required by budget resolution).
- **June 30** House completes action on annual appropriations bills.
- **July 15:** President submits mid-session review of his budget to Congress.
- **October 1** Fiscal year begins.

Appropriations = Slicing the Pie



Appropriations

- The budget resolution distributes federal spending to 20 functional categories such as health, social security, education, training, employment, and social services.
- This overall spending amount is allocated to the 13 Appropriations Subcommittees to be divided up among various programs.
- All spending for these programs must fit within this discretionary cap.

Federal Budget

- \$3.65 Trillion for FY '17 with a \$0.44 Trillion deficit.....
- \$4.094 Trillion for FY'18 with another \$0.44 Trillion (\$440 Billion) deficit
- (**national debt now over \$21 Trillion**)
- \$4.53 Trillion for FY'19 with over \$500 billion in additional deficits; mandatory spending accounts for \$2.841 Trillion (67%) of total; Interest is \$479 billion
- President Trump proposed FY'20 budget on March 11, 2019 for a record \$4.746 trillion with a deficit of \$1.101 trillion.

Federal Budget

- Funds a wide variety of programs
- Three types of Budget items
 - Entitlement/Mandatory
 - Discretionary
 - Interest on the National Debt
- Unified budget of trust funds for Social Security and Medicare is confusing as regards the deficit and national debt

Mandatory Spending

- Funding is set by formulas in the law and lasts until the law is changed
- Examples
 - Social Security Retirement, SSDI, SSI
 - Medicare, Medicaid, Food Stamps
 - Veteran's Benefits
- Everyone who meets the criteria gets the benefit; no waiting lists

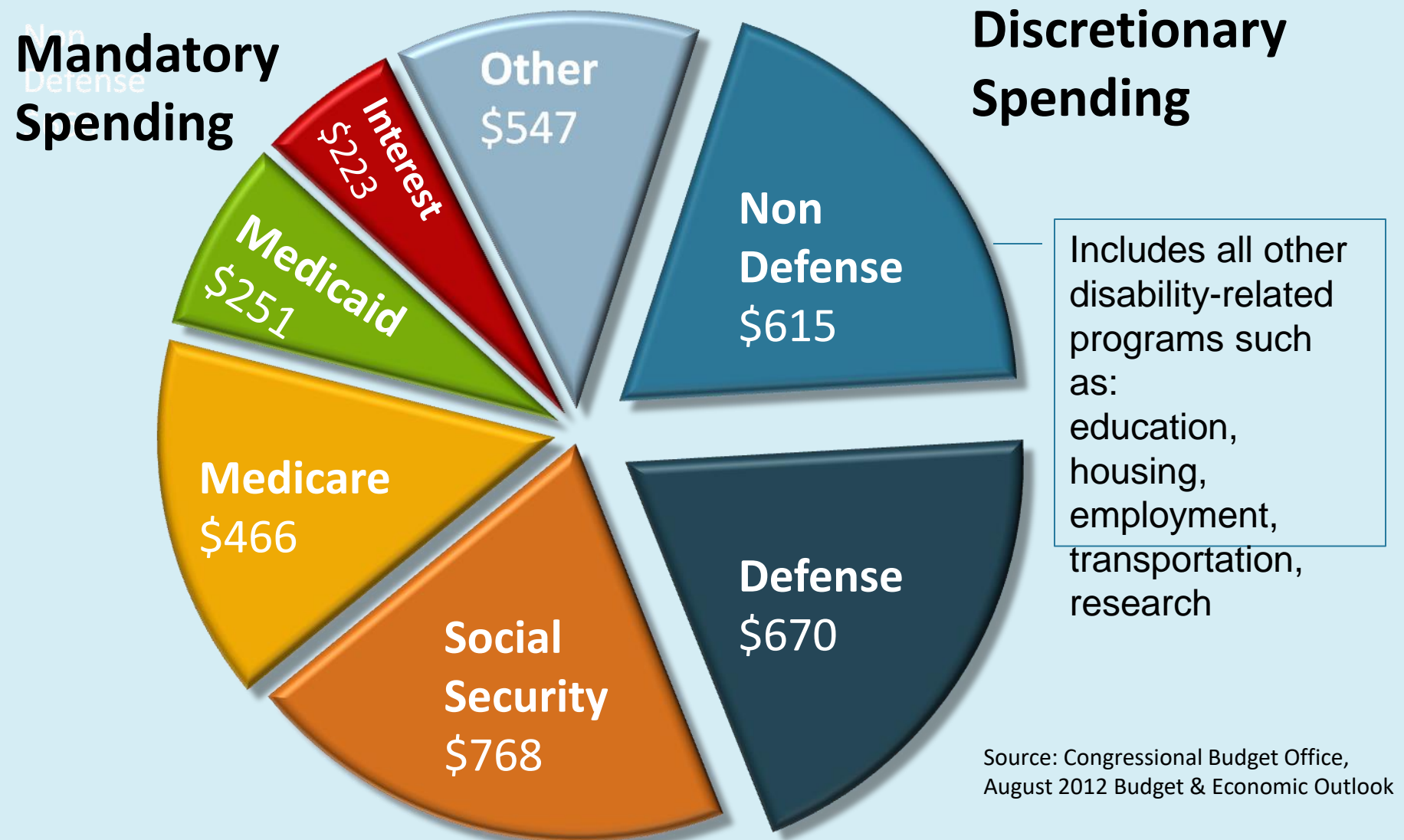
Discretionary Spending

- Congress sets amounts each year
- Funding is optional for Congress
- Can vary from year to year
- Funding can be discontinued
- E.I.; IDEA; Head Start; V.R.; Tech Act; DD Act; Older Americans Act; HUD programs.

Continuing to Grow The National Debt

- The National Debt increased by \$310.3 Billion from September 1, 2018 – January 31, 2019, up from \$175.7 Billion for the same period one year ago.
- The National Debt reached \$22.7 Trillion on September 30, 2019 (interest on debt \$404 Billion)
- The CBO (Congressional Budget Office) projects that the national debt will reach over \$33 Trillion in 2028

TOTAL FEDERAL SPENDING IN FY 2012 = \$3.54 Trillion (in Billions)



From an Idea to a Program

- Authorizing Committees
 - Can establish, continue or modify an agency or program for a fixed or indefinite period of time
 - State that the money can be spent
 - Can set a limit on how much money each year
 - Often state, “such sums as may be necessary”
- Appropriations Committees:
 - Provides budget authority to spend money for specific purposes
 - Discretionary and Permanent (e.g. Social Security) Appropriations

From an Idea to a Program

- Budget Committees

- Start with the President's Budget

- Set the maximum amount that the government will spend on a program

- Budget Resolution isn't law; it isn't signed by the President

From an Idea to a Program

- Senate Budget Committee

Chairman Sen. Patty Murray, (D, WA)

Ranking Member Sen. Jeff Sessions, (R, AL)

- House Budget Committee

Chairman Rep. Diane Black, (R, TN)

Ranking Member Rep. John Yarmuth, (D, KY)

From an Idea to a Program

- Senate Appropriations Committee

Chairman Sen. Thad Cochran, (R, MS)

Ranking Member Sen. Patrick Leahy (VT)

- House Appropriations Committee

Chairman Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen, (R, NJ)

Ranking Member Rep. Nita Lowey, (D, NY)

(Rep. McCollum a member)

From an Idea to a Program

- Appropriations Sub-Committees

- 13 Sub-Committees

- Same in both houses

- Pass funding for groups of agencies

- Contain grant programs and direct programs

- Earmarks or “Pork”

From an Idea to a Program

- Floor Vote
 - Motion to Recommit (House)
- Conference Committee
 - Works out differences
 - Usually most senior members
- Floor Passage in both chambers
- Presidential signature; ceremony

From an Idea to a Program

- Budget Reconciliation; established in the Congressional Budget Act of 1974
- Administration
 - Competitive Grants
 - Earmarks

From an Idea to a Program

- Hooray! You're Funded
- Then to the Executive Branch for Regulations
- Public notice and comment period; NPRM
- Final Rules

What is advocacy?

- Influencing public policy
- Not just new laws but also:
 - Seeking adequate funding
 - Making sure laws are implemented
 - Making sure laws are enforced
 - Making sure laws are interpreted correctly



How to advocate

Need to understand:

- Legislative and regulatory processes
 - How are policies made?
 - Timeline for decisions
- Who the key policymakers are
- Political climate
- Evolution of disability policy; history
- Current and key Issues
- What the issues mean to you
- How to tell your personal story

What can you do?

- Write letters
- Make phone calls
- Make personal visits; attend town hall meetings
- Write letters to the editor
- Participate in local politics
- Organize a candidate's forum

Working with Members

■ Proper Correspondence

The Honorable Jane Smith

Email, Fax, Phone, Mail

When to use each?

Email – directly to staff

Fax – initial request for meetings

Phone – initial contact, follow-up

Mail – thank you, non time sensitive information
irradiation

Where to Meet?

- DC

Close to action

- District Office

Close to home

Working with Members

- Don't insist on meeting with members
Staff play a very important role

Typical Office Structure

Member
Chief of Staff

Legislative Director
Legislative Staff

District Director
District Staff

For Additional Information, contact

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