

Structures, Powers and Functions of Congress

Explain how the structures, powers and functions of both houses of Congress affect the policy making process.

1. When the U.S. Congress is called “bicameral” it means that
 - a. The U.S. Congress is divided between two parties
 - b. The U.S. Congress is a two-house legislature
 - c. The U.S. Congress has two-year terms
 - d. The U.S. Congress has two primary leaders

2. All of the following is true about the House of Representatives EXCEPT
 - a. 435 members
 - b. Serve for six-year terms
 - c. Directly elected by the people
 - d. Tends to be more responsive to localized issues

3. Which of the following determines who holds the leadership positions in Congress?
 - a. Majority party
 - b. Tenure in office
 - c. Bipartisan vote
 - d. Presidential appointment

4. Who is the most powerful person in the House of Representatives?
 - a. Speaker
 - b. Majority Leader
 - c. Majority Whip
 - d. Minority Leader

5. After years of serving in the House Tom was given the responsibility of informally vote counting in the House of Representatives. This duty also involved attempting to sway votes in favor of Tom’s party position. What title is given to Tom’s work?
 - a. Speaker
 - b. Majority Leader
 - c. Majority Whip
 - d. Minority Leader

6. Who is the most powerful person in the Senate?
 - a. President of the Senate
 - b. President Pro Tempore
 - c. Majority Leader
 - d. Majority Whip

7. This type of committee reconciles differences between House and Senate bills before they are sent to the president for signing

- a. Select committee
- b. Standing committee
- c. Conference committee
- d. Committee of the whole

8. The legislative process in the House of Representatives includes all of the following steps EXCEPT

- a. Leadership sets the agenda
- b. Rules Committee
- c. Unlimited debate
- d. Roll call voting

9. The legislative process in the Senate includes all of the following steps EXCEPT

- a. Leadership sets the agenda
- b. Rules Committee
- c. Unlimited debate
- d. Roll call voting

10. When members of Congress engage in logrolling they are

- a. Vote trading
- b. Defeating a bill
- c. Delaying action on a bill
- d. Introducing a bill

11. Confirmation of presidential appointments and ratifying treaties is a role given to

- a. Congress
- b. House members only
- c. Senate members only
- d. Cabinet level appointees

12. The U.S. House of Representatives is supposed to represent the people. Which of the following can be said about the demographic make-up of today's House of Representatives?

- a. More females but still no minorities
- b. Disproportionately more minorities
- c. Much less male and much less white
- d. Far less educated and fewer foreign born

13. Which one the following federal budget line items would be considered an entitlement program?

- a. Military spending
- b. Social Security
- c. Funding for the arts
- d. Funding to protect the environment

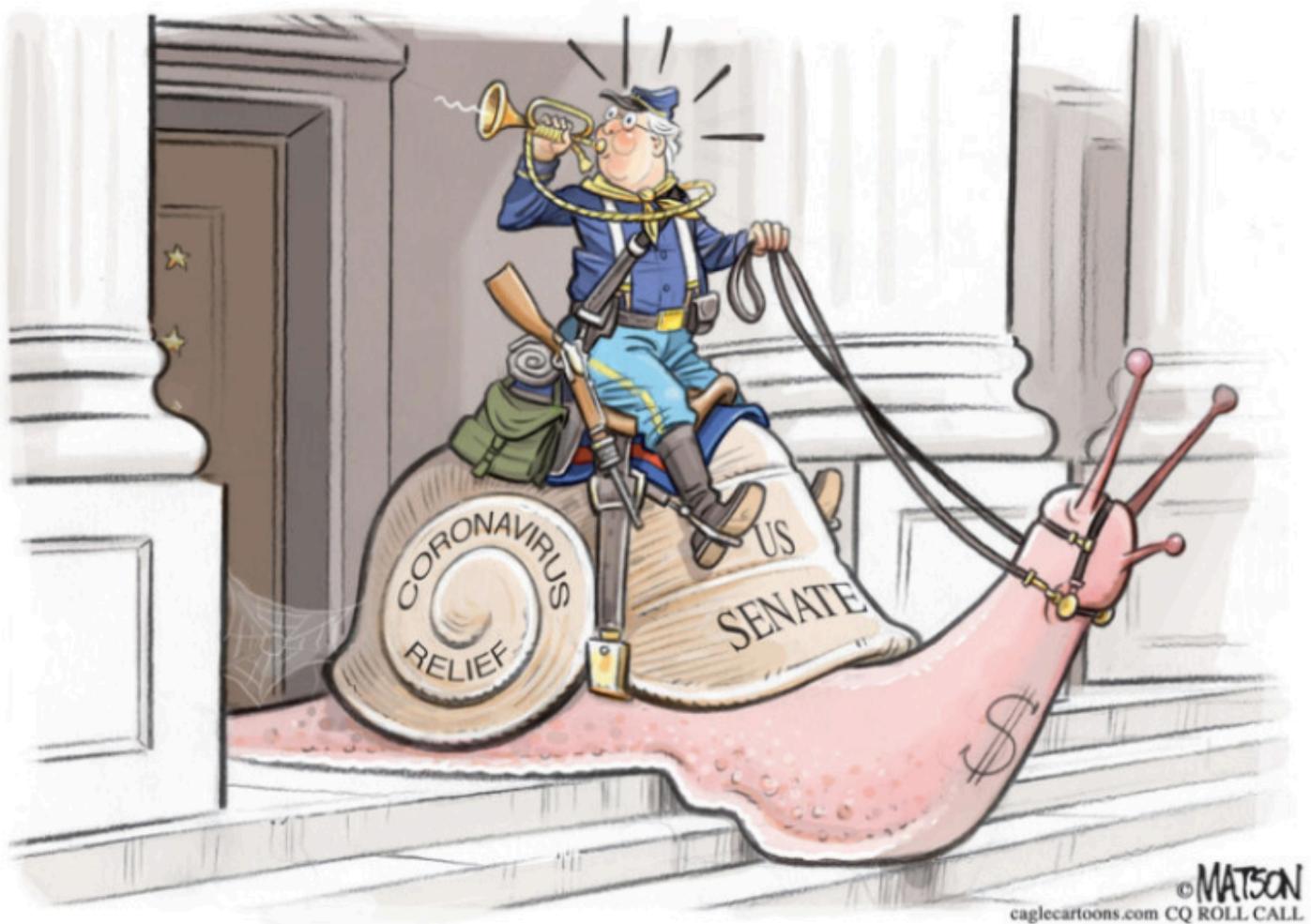
14. Which one the following federal budget line items would be considered a discretionary program?

- a. Military spending
- b. Social Security
- c. Medicaid
- d. Funding for workers with disabilities

15. Which one the following statements would be most true about the federal budget process?

- a. Congress has little control over the federal budget.
- b. Congress spends little time debating or disputing over the federal budget
- c. In order to pass a budget each year Congress must resort to deliberative compromise
- d. Huge tax revenues provide our federal government enough money for both parties to get what they want.

Critical Thinking Prompt 1: Political scientists identify three types of democracy – elitist, pluralist, and participatory. Explain how our Congress exemplifies each type. In which type is our Congress most effective?



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Critical Thinking Prompt 2: Considering the functions of Congress, is this cartoon a positive or a negative depiction of the Senate? Explain. What would Alexander Hamilton have thought?