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## Magruder's American Government

CHAPTER 11
Powers of Congress



## **Powers of Congress**

**SECTION 1** The Scope of Congressional Powers

**SECTION 2** The Expressed Powers of Money and Commerce

**SECTION 3** Other Expressed Powers

**SECTION 4** The Implied Powers

**SECTION 5** The Nonlegislative Powers

## **The Nonlegislative Powers**

- What is Congress's role in amending the Constitution and in deciding elections?
- What is Congress's impeachment power, and how has it been used in the past?
- What are Congress's executive powers?
- What is Congress's investigatory power?



# Constitutional Amendments and Electoral Duties

#### **Constitutional Amendments**

 Article V gives Congress the power to propose amendments by a two-thirds vote in each house.

#### **Electoral Duties**

- In certain circumstances, the Constitution gives Congress special electoral duties.
- If no candidate for President receives a majority in the electoral college, the House decides the election.
- If no candidate for Vice President receives a majority in the electoral college, the Senate decides the election.
- Also, if the vice presidency is vacated, the President selects a successor, who faces congressional approval by a majority vote in both houses.

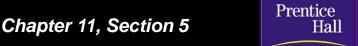




### **Impeachment Power**

- The Constitution grants Congress the power of removing the President, Vice President, or other civil officers from their office through impeachment.
- The House has the sole power to impeach, or bring charges against the individual.
- There is then a trial in the Senate. A two-thirds vote of the senators present is needed for conviction.
- The penalty for conviction is removal from office.





#### **Executive Powers**

#### **Appointments**

- All major appointments made by the President must be confirmed by the Senate by majority vote.
- Only 12 of 600 Cabinet appointments to date have been declined.
- "Senatorial courtesy" is the practice in which the Senate will turn down an appointment if it is opposed by a senator of the President's party from the State involved.

#### **Treaties**

- The President makes treaties "by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate,... provided two thirds of the Senators present concur."
- Presently, the President often consults members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.





## **Investigatory Power**

Congress may choose to conduct investigations through its standing committees for several reasons:

- (1) to gather information useful to Congress in the making of some legislation;
- (2) to oversee the operations of various executive branch agencies;
- (4) to expose the questionable activities of public officials or private persons;
- (3) to focus public attention on a particular subject;
- (5) to promote the particular interests of some members of Congress.





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