The Legislative Process: How a Bill becomes a Law

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Class:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Go to the website below:

<http://congress.indiana.edu/interactive-learning-modules>

2. Start by watching the introduction.

A. What are you going to learn through this activity?

3. Next Take the quiz on how a bill becomes a law. Fill in the following blanks with the correct word to make the statement accurate.

A. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_% of bills become laws.

B. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_are able to introduce Bills.

C. Most of the work for bills is done\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

D. the House and Senate have \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_role in the legislative process.

E. A bill could be voted on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_times before it is presented to the President.

4. Next fill out the flow chart on the “textbook” way that a bill becomes a law on the back of this page.

A. Fill out chart.

B. Why is this called the “textbook” version instead of the real thing?

5. Now continue onto the section called “Criticisms of the Legislative Process.” Answer the questions on the site AND the ones below.

A. What is the problem with citizen’s complaint that Congress doesn’t do anything? Base your answer off of the paragraph from James Q. Wilson.

B. What role does conflict play in the legislation process? Base your answer off the paragraph by Alan Rosenthal.

C. Why must compromises be reached in Congress? Base your answer off the paragraph by Walter J. Oleszeck.

D. “Special interests” are groups such as big businesses or organizations with specific motives. Explain why special interest groups have benefited minorities. Base your answer based on the paragraph by Alan R. Gitelson.

E. Explain how not having a simple majority rules protects citizens. Base your answer off the paragraph by William Lasser.

F. How do your feelings about Congress compare to everyone else’s answers?

G. Why is Congress set up to have slow, deliberate actions?

H. Why is Congress set up to have disputes and arguments?

I. Why is Congress set up to make people compromise?

J. Why is Congress set up to allow special interest groups to have a role in the process of making laws?

K. Why is the majority not allowed to rule?

L. According to the paragraph By John R. Hibbing and Elizabeth Thess-Morse, what should we be teaching you in school and why?

6. Watch the movie:

1. What really slows up the lawmaking process?
2. What must a member proposing a law be prepared to do?
3. How do members get widespread support to a bill?
4. At each stage, what needs to be attained to keep a bill moving forward?
5. What is easier, passing a bill or defeating it?
6. List three ways steps can be skipped?
7. What is the downside of skipping steps?
8. What is the upside of skipping steps?

7. List three solid results of Congress.

8. Choose **one** of the two videos (either Bill or John) to watch. Summarize the person’s opinion about Congress in two sentences.

9. Listen to the summary by Lee Hamilton. Describe the legislative process.

“**Textbook” way a bill becomes a law**