

Congress Duties and Compensation

Some Duties of Members of Congress:

- Attend annual sessions in D.C. that last from January 3 until...
- Help in the formulation of federal policies and laws. There are about 5,000 “bills” submitted per year.
- Establish the Federal Budget (due October 1 = Fiscal Year)
- Help with oversight and confirmations of executive branch nominations
- Develop national issues, solutions, public investigations.
- Attend congressional committees and sub-committee meetings (each member of Congress belongs to several committees)
- Research, write, revise federal legislation (the previously mentioned 5,000 bills)
- Debate at committee meetings, hearings, party caucuses, floor debates
- Complete all legislative votes
- Be available to meet with public groups that travel to D.C.
- Attend meeting in home district/state
- Campaign for re-election
- Raise funds for self and party groups
- Maintain two residences: home district/state and D.C. area

Pay and Compensation of the Federal Congress

HR = 435

Senate = 100

- Base salary (2009) \$174,000 a year
- Leaders earn \$193,400
- Speaker earns \$223,500
- Office space in D.C. and home district provided
- Office expense account: \$100,000 per representative, up to \$1,000,000 for officers
- Staff expense account (salaries): \$557,000 per Rep and \$1 million or so per Senator
- Travel allowance: trips to home state or on federal projects
- Franking costs provided (except to campaign)
- Retirement pension based on seniority
- Medical and life insurance costs during service paid
- Capitol area restaurants on “tab”
- Congressional pharmacy
- Congressional pool
- Congressional gym
- Congressional training and masseuse staff
- Congressional wholesale store
- Free parking in the US
- Congressional barber shop
- Congressional gas station
- Congressional car wash
- Tax “homestead” exemption for second home (all others in the US get one tax cut for “homesteads”)