

The Legislative Branch of State Government

- What **words** do I need to know?
 - General Assembly
 - House of Representatives
 - Senate
 - Speaker of the House
 - Reapportionment
 - Lieutenant governor

Legislative Branch

- law-making body in Georgia
- officially known as [Georgia General Assembly](#)
- bicameral (two-houses): [House of Representatives](#) and [Senate](#)
- only House can write spending bills; Senate confirms appointments made by the governor

Members of the General Assembly

- 180 members
- [elected by popular vote](#)
- no limit on number of consecutive terms
- members' districts have about the same number of voters
- Qualifications
 - citizen of US and Georgia at least 2 years
 - legal resident of district at least 1 year
 - Senators: at least 25 years old
 - Representatives: at least 21 years old

Legislative Sessions

- 40-day session, January – March
- members of house of representatives elect Speaker of the House
- lieutenant governor presides over senate but has no vote
- Speaker can vote if there is a tie

Committees

- organized like Congress in committees and subcommittees
- bills may start in House or Senate
- standing committees: permanent part of the General Assembly
- interim committee: works on assigned special tasks
- conference committee: works out agreements between house and senate on bills
- joint committee: has members of House and Senate to work on assigned topic or issue
- members serve on several committees

Types of Legislation

- can pass laws, amend (change) them, or do away with them
- some law topics:
 - taxes
 - education
 - property
 - criminal matters and punishments
 - public health
 - regulation of businesses & professions

How a Bill Becomes a Law

- **any senator or representative can propose a bill**
- **bills related to spending must begin in the House**
- **same version of the bill must pass House and Senate**
- **compromise bill may come from conference committee**
- **governor can sign or veto the bill if it passes both the House and Senate**

Reapportionment

- Occurs each 10 years following the census
- legislature must redraw the voting districts to make them have the equal numbers of people
- 2001: districts drawn by Democratic legislature ruled unconstitutional
- 2004: revisions made to district map
- gerrymandering: drawing up a election district to support a particular group