



HOW DOES IT WORK? CONGRESS



How California's members of Congress represent you and how you can **make your voice heard in Washington, D.C.**



3 BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT

Legislative

Executive



Judicial



The United States Congress is the Legislative branch of the federal government, responsible for changing existing laws and making new federal laws, controlling the federal budget, declaring war, and more

Congress is made up of two houses: a lower house, called the House of Representatives, with 435 members; and an upper house, called the United States Senate, with 100 members.



CALIFORNIA'S CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

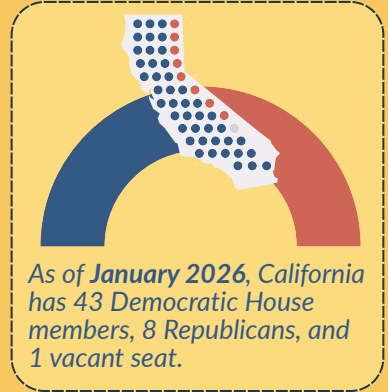
Each Californian is represented in the federal government by one **Congress member** and two **U.S. Senators**.

Congress members

California has 52 members in the House of Representatives. Each member represents an equal number of Californians. House Representatives serve two-year terms and are up for election every midterm and presidential election year.

U.S. Senators

California has two members in the United States Senate, as does every state in the nation, regardless of population. Senators serve six-year, staggered terms, meaning every two years, a different third of the Senate is up for election.



2026 is a midterm election year. On **November 3, 2026**, every member of the House of Representatives is up for election.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES +

Both the House and the Senate hold hearings that guide the **law-making process**, provide **oversight** of the executive branch with their investigative powers, and have the power to **declare war** and are in control of the federal government **budget**, which includes **taxation**.



From the California State Geoportal (February 2026)

California is currently divided into **52 congressional districts**; these districts determine who represents you in the House of Representatives.

Find your Congressional representatives here:

[congress.gov/members/find-your-member](https://www.congress.gov/members/find-your-member)



U.S. SENATE

The Senate has the additional responsibility of confirming or denying **federal appointments** from the executive branch. These executive appointments come from the president and include – but are not limited to – **Cabinet members**, senior leadership positions within **executive departments**, and **federal judges**, which include the **Supreme Court of the United States**.

Each state has two U.S. senators.
California Senate Representatives,
as of 2026:



Alex Padilla (D)
2021-2027



Adam Schiff (D)
2024-2031

THE POWER OF ADVOCACY

Californians have the power to make their voices heard at the federal level by contacting their Congressional members, participating in activations, and showing up to vote in Congressional elections, especially midterm elections.

Members of the House and Senate have offices in Washington, D.C., and within their district. These offices are for you to interact with the federal government so that our elected representatives are aware of the laws and services we need in our communities.

All elected representatives have an official website, which is structured as [LastName.house.gov](#) for House members and [LastName.senate.gov](#) for Senate members. From these websites, you can learn about our representatives' day-to-day activities, get updates on legislation they're working on, and find out how to contact their offices if you need help with services and to advocate for legislation that you know your community needs.



CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVES

Every year, Congress votes on important bills that have the power to impact your daily life. Below is an easy sample call script to help you reach out to your representatives:

Hello, my name is [NAME], and I am a constituent from [AREA]. I am calling today to urge [REPRESENTATIVE'S NAME] to [SUPPORT OR REJECT] the [BILL NAME/ ISSUE AREA].

This bill is important to my community because [...].

This bill would impact my community by [...].

I hope to see my representative advocate for *all* Californians. Thank you for your time.

CONGRESSIONAL WATCH HUB



Find your representatives' **contact information** and see a list of **important bills** that Courage California is tracking:

bit.ly/CongressWatchHub

This zine was created by Courage California Institute

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