

‘members of
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constituents well but
their country badly’

[Politics](#), [Democracy](#)



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Discuss... By nature and definition Members of Congress are representative of local constituencies which have local interests, this means that they represent different types of people and so have to react to a unique combination of personal, electoral and political influences. So it is evident that it would be difficult to balance the interests of the constituents and those of congress and the country in general when creating or voting on policies and programs for the entire country. This can cause huge amounts of tension but when it comes down to it, members of congress must ultimately represent their constituents. There are two different types of members of congress which have different effects on their constituents and the country; firstly there are delegates, these are representatives who cast their vote in consistency with the desire of the majority of the constituents which he or she represents. This would mean that they would be far better at being representative of and fulfilling their role within their constituency. However it can also have a knock on effect of not being beneficial for the country as a whole, each state is so different and their priorities so diverse that it is extremely difficult to find policies which are appropriate and beneficial for the whole country. Therefore in that respect delegate members of congress are serving their country badly as they do not take into consideration or neglect national needs and norms. Trustees on the other hand are representatives who cast votes based upon what he or she believes is best. In this case it is potentially more likely that they will vote for policies which they feel are more beneficial and appropriate for the whole country, this may mean that they are neglecting the needs or wishes of their

constituents. Similarly some members of congress are more likely to pay attention to and reflect the values and opinions of those who voted for them in the primaries and general election in the hope that it will increase their chances of being re-elected. As a result sections of a constituency may feel that their needs are ignored or forgotten. Members of congress with a certain policy focus are comparatively less concerned with day-to-day constituent concerns pursue larger goals for example concentrating on issues such as strengthening national defence, environmental matters, education or national budgets. This type of members of congress are more interested in enacting policies they support as opposed to looking after the interest of their constituents, they are more likely to vote with the majority of their party regardless of constituents opinions. On an unofficial level of representation, there are people known as 'lobbyists' similar to pressure groups who aim to influence members of congress, they may adapt their perspectives which may then serve to be more beneficial to the country as a whole. As a final point ultimately a decision or vote made for the benefit of a member of congress' constituency does not mean it is necessarily a bad service to the country as it may also be applicable and appropriate as a whole. So although it can be said that some members of congress serve their country badly, it seems to be more as a result of making the decision to prioritise their constituents. In some cases this is reversed, with the country being served and represented well while the constituency's needs are left behind, others may even be successful and accomplish the difficult task of finding a balance and serving both effectively. But I do not believe it is fair to

say that all members of congress serve their constituents well and country badly.