

# American government

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American Government In order to avoid the abuse of power by the three arms of the government, the judiciary, the legislature and the executive, separation of powers, as a political doctrine is provided for by the USA constitution. This provision is in form of checks and balances, providing for each arm of the government the powers and responsibilities that it should exercise (Kilman and Costello, 12). The idea of separation of powers is found in the first three articles of the American constitution. These articles provides for different duties and powers, with the first article handling the roles of the house and the senate, the second article providing for the powers and responsibilities of the president, the vice president and the departments, while the third article caters for the duties and authorities of the federal and the supreme courts. The system of checking the powers is enhanced through having one arm of the government limit the powers of the other.

The system of checks and balances can be demonstrated by the nature of relationships between these arms of the government. The executive is authorized to constitute the judiciary through having the president appoint judges. The legislature on the other hand is mandated to approve or disapprove the appointments made by the president. This way, there is a participation of each arm of the government in such decision making, ensuring that no arm exercises excessive powers over the others (Kilman and Costello, 56). The other nature of a relationship is that while the legislature, through the congress passes a law, the executive, through the president can veto such a law (Kilman and Costello, 58). Further, the judiciary can rule on the unconstitutionality of a law passed by the legislature, but the legislature can avert this through initiating the amendment of the constitution to suit such laws, if deemed necessary for the

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state. Thus, the separation of powers ensures that each arm is accountable to the others and by extension the whole republic (Kilman and Costello, 79). The process of passing a bill into a law includes the introduction of such a bill by the congress. The bill can either emanate from the senate or the house of representative, with the person introducing it becoming the sponsor (Kilman and Costello, 107). The introduced bill is then passed on to a selected committee of the senate or the house, depending on the nature and the rules of the process, for consideration. From here it can be passed on to subcommittees for further review. The next stage after the committee and the sub-committee deliberations is the reporting stage, where the committee members report their findings and recommendations about the bill to the congress. From here, the bill is published, then, scheduled for a debate. Later on the bill is debated in the house, voted for or against, when it passes this stage; it is passed on to the president for assent (Kilman and Costello, 181).

The powers of the state relative to that of the federal government have reduced over time. For example, while under the article of confederation the states could default its payment of taxes to the federal government, this has changed under the new constitution, where the states are now answerable to the federal government for any default in such payments (Kilman and Costello, 235).

#### Works Cited

Kilman, Jones and Costello, Gordon. (Eds). *The Constitution of the United States of America: Analysis and Interpretation*, 2000. 12-236. Print.