**Government Review Sheet**

**The Legislative Branch**

**Section 1- Congress and the Constitution**

**1)What is bicameral? 2 houses**

**2)What does Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution describe? Expressed powers of the legislative branch**

**3)How long is a term of Congress? 2 sessions, January 3rd of odd numbered years**

**4)What are the three qualifications to run for senator? 30 years old, 9 years citizen of the United States, legal resident of the state of election**

**The House of Representatives? At least 25 years old 7 years citizen legal resident of the state of election, senator 30, president 35**

**5)What is the 27th Amendment? Senators can give themselves a pay raise, but it cannot go into effect until the next term**

**6)What is the difference between loose and strict construction? Loose changes the constitution, strict keeps it the same**

**7)What is the necessary and proper clause? “Elastic Clause” congress has the power beyond those expressed in the first 17 clauses of article 1 section 8**

**8)What gives Congress the power to set minimum wage? Regulation of commerce**

**9)Explain how the House might be considered more representative of the people than the Senate? A 2 year term, represent fewer constituents (voters)**

**Section 2- Congressional Duties**

**A bill is read and given a number when introduced**

**10)What is gerrymandering? “Packing and Cracking”**

**11)What is a constituent? A voter, people in a district represented in Congress**

**12)Who presides over the House of Representatives? The Senate? Speaker of the House; Vice President**

**13)What are the duties of the Speaker of the House? Schedules bills for action, refers bills to the proper committee, appoints some committee members**

**14)What is a filibuster? How can it be defeated? Prevents others from debating and allows a minority to block the actions of the majority; “clocher” if 3/5 of the senate votes it down**

**15)Who has the power to write rules in Congress? The majority power (in charge) “House Traffic Officer”**

**16)What is the job of the majority leader? Steer important bills through the House, plan the party’s legislative program,**

**17)Who assists the majority and minority leaders in Congress? Whips**

**18)How does the existence of committees in the House and Senate enable Congress to work more efficiently? Committees are based on seniority, committees divide the work into specialty areas so that all members do not need to become familiar with every issue, committees screen bills for worthy ones, fact finding investigations**

**19)Who controls the standing committees? Majority party**

**20)What is a subcommittee? A group which specializes in a subcategory of it’s standing committees responsibility**

**21)What are joint committees? Study groups for the House and the Senate, joint resolution propose constitutional amendments**

**22)What is a select committee? Temporary congressional committee that works to resolve problems of interest groups, handles overlooked problems and also matters of great public concern**

**23)What are the three key committees of the Senate? Finance (taxes, money, budget), appropriations (where is money going to go), foreign relations**

**24)Where is Social Security located? A House subcommittee**

**25)Where is most of the important work on tax law occurring? House Ways and Means committee**

**26)What committees have the power to cut budgets? Appropriations committee**

**27)Who do some lawmakers believe have too much power? Congressional staffers**

**28)What are the responsibilities of an administrative assistant? Run the lawmaker’s office (day to day operations), supervises the schedule, gives advice on political matters**

**29)What are the duties of a legislative assistant? Draft bills, write speeches and articles, attend committee meetings, performs legislative research**

**30)What are caseworkers? Congressional staffers who help constituents with problems, help lawmakers get reelected; oversee the executive branch; provide a way for the average citizen to deal with bureaucracy**

**31)Who does Congress coordinate their budget making with? Congressional budget office**

**32)What are the three major congressional support agencies? Library of congress, government printing office, general accounting office**

**Section 3- Bills and Laws**

**33)What are the methods of voting on bills? Electronic, role call, standing vote,**

**34)What are revenue bills? Laws for raising money for the federal government**

**35)What are appropriation bills? Proposed laws to authorize spending money**

**36)What is significant about federal grants and contracts? A source of federal money and jobs**

**Section 4- Checks and Balances**

**37)What is censure? A vote of formal disapproval of a members actions**

**38)What is a subpoena? A legal order that a person appear in court or produce requested documents**

**39)What is immunity? Freedom from prosecution for witnesses whose testimony ties them to illegal acts**

**40)What is perjury? Witnesses who do not tell the truth**

**41)What was the significance of the court case *Watkins v. United States?* Power of congress not unlimited in conducting investigations but nothing in the US Constitution gives it authority to expose individuals private affairs**

**42)What tools can congressional committees use when dealing with witnesses?**

**Ammunity, subpoena, immunity, holding contempt**

**43)What is legislative oversight and why was it found unconstitutional? The power that allows congress to check on how the executive branch is administering the law, it violated separation of powers**

**44)What is the significance of the War Powers Act? Requires the president to notify congress when committing military forces**

**45)What caused Congress to eventually follow the President’s lead in the Persian Gulf War? Public opinion**

**46)What are the three main reasons why the president and Congress often disagree? Partisan politics, different political timetables, checks and balances**

**47)If the United States had a multiparty system instead of two major parties, would conflict between the president and Congress increase or decrease? Explain your answer. Increase in the US, increase the potential for partisan conflict among the branches**

**48)What is gridlock? A stalemate, nothing is getting done,**

**49)What is a concurrent resolution? A deal with matters requiring action of the House and the senate but does not require the President’s signature**

**50)What was the importance of the Civil Rights Act? Through interstate commerce segregation was no longer allowed**

**Section 5- Budget**

**51)What is the largest portion of the federal government budget spent on? Uncontrollables**

**52)What is an entitlement? Something that you are entitled to or deserve because you paid into it**

**53)Explain why pork-barrel legislation and logrolling exist and how they affect government spending. Lawmakers support each other (logrolling); (pork-barrel) appropriate money for local programs; interest of constituents raises the cost of government**