



Limitations on the Federal Government

Popular Sovereignty and the Ideas of Checks and Balances, Federalism,
and Republicanism



Constitutionalism

- One of the main purposes of a constitution is to place limitations on the government to tell is what it can and can not do.
- The Constitution is the “Law of the Land” and political leaders can be removed for not fulfilling their duties or exceeding their power





The Idea of Popular Sovereignty

- Framers of the Constitution wanted the ultimate power and authority to rest with the people
 - Through system of voting and the freedom speech citizens have the ability to influence government

“...and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

- Abraham Lincoln, Nov 19, 1863

Excerpt from Gettysburg Address





Republicanism

- The Framers established a system that would be responsive to change and to the will of the people
 - Senators and Representatives have term limits and need to get re-elected
 - If Senators or Representatives do not vote according to the wishes of the people they risk not getting re-elected.

FEDERALISM	REPUBLICANISM
Despised Republican form of government	Esteemed Republican form of government
Sovereignty of government	Sovereignty of people
Government control of people	People control of government
Supremacy of Federal Right	Supremacy of States Rights
Complex unlimited bureaucracy	Simplicity of limited government
Growing National Debt	No National Debt
New foreign wars	No foreign wars
Increasing taxation	No Internal Taxation
Establishing a National Bank	No National Bank
Issue paper money	Issue hard money
Subvert Constitution	Conform to Constitution
Corruption of legislature	Honesty of legislature
Executive decrees laws	Legislature passes laws



The Referendum System

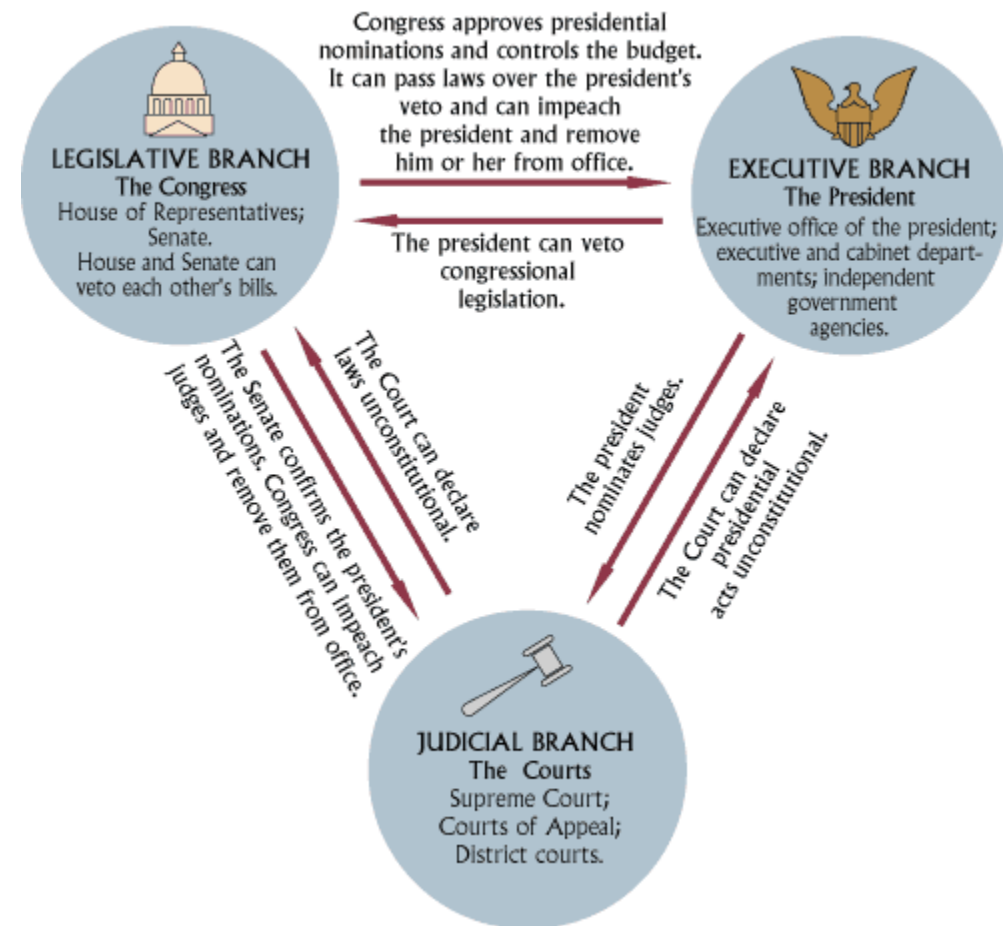
- A Referendum is a special vote that can be brought on by a petition to attempt to overrule a law that has already been passed by the legislature
 - Gives citizens the right to overturn actions of the government
 - No system in place at the national level, but it exists at state and local levels
 - Sometimes referendums used on laws that legislatures deem important enough





Checks and Balances

- System put in place to prevent one branch of government from getting too powerful
 - Each branch is given certain oversights and abilities to counter the actions of the other branches





Protections from the People

- US Constitution framed in such a way as to protect the government from an “Uneducated Mob”
 - Electoral College instead of Popular Vote for Presidential election
 - Until 1913 State Senators were elected by State Legislatures instead of a General Election (17th Amendment)
 - Changed to give General Population more political power and reduce corruption in the Senate
 - Separated State politics from National politics

