

Your Name:

Professor's Name:

Course Title and Number:

Due Date:

## **The Three Branches of the United States Government**

### Introduction

The United States government is based on the premise that it is controlled by the power of the American people through those they delegate as having authority to make decisions for them. In an effort to balance this power, the government is composed of three major branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. The formation and operation of the three branches is based on the U.S. Constitution and provided by under Articles 1, 2, and 3 (Hamilton, 2004). The purpose of this paper is to discuss the function of each branch in relationship to the Constitution.

### Executive Branch

When one thinks of the Executive Branch, it is associated with the power and the authority of the President of the United States. His roles include Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. He has the responsibility to make certain that federal laws and policies passed by Congress and signed by him are enforced (Hamilton, 2004). With that purpose in mind, he appoints the heads of the various federal agencies as well as members of the Cabinet. The members of the Executive Branch continuously monitor issues that arise nationally and internationally concerning public policies, such as enforcing and maintaining individual rights (Spiker, 2009). One such issue that has increasingly gained focus in the past decade is gay rights. Also, included in the Executive Branch is the Vice President of the United States who must be prepared to take the place of the President if the need arises.

## Legislative Branch

The Legislative Branch of the United States Government is composed of 2 major sections, the House of Representatives and the Senate. The House of Representatives consists of 435 elected members from the 50 states, with the number of members from each state determined by that state's population. Also included in the House of Representatives are 6 members who do not have voting rights. They represent the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and 4 other territories belonging to the United States. The Senate is composed of 100 members, with 2 members representing each state. The Constitution provides Congress with the sole authority to pass legislation (Hamilton, 2004) and to make a declaration of war, as well as to confirm or reject a number of appointments proposed by the President. The two parts of Congress must be in agreement to initiate and pass the federal laws that impact the country (Spiker, 2009). Part of that decision-making is determining what should be mandated federally as opposed to being addressed on a state level.

## Judicial Branch

The Judicial Branch is composed of Supreme Court Justices appointed by the President of the United States and then approved by Congress. Each member serves until death, retirement, or criminal conviction by the Senate. The reasoning for this is to help the Supreme Court Justices to remain impartial in the eyes of the public as they determine how to interpret and apply federal laws judiciously. In addition, the Supreme Court often resolves disputes that arise in the lower courts (Hamilton, 2004; Spiker, 2009). The number of justices on the Supreme Court can fluctuate, depending on the decisions made by Congress.

## Conclusion

The United States Government is comprised of 3 branches: the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial. The purpose of the three branches is to establish and maintain a balance of power. The concept involves protecting the rights of the American people by ensuring that the laws of the land are fair and equitable to all and are enforced in such a way as to respect the rights of all. As moral issues arise, public opinion will influence laws that are developed, passed, and enacted on a federal level. The balancing of state and federal powers is crucial, so decisions are made as to whether an issue is a state-level or a federal one that involves all the people of the land.

Works Cited

Hamilton, J. *Branches of government*. Minnesota: ABDO Publishing Company, 2004. Print.

Spiker, S. "Power players of public policy: The basics of politics." *American Affairs*, 2009. Web.

03 July, 2014. <<http://sarah-spiker.suite101.com/power-players-of-public-policy-a92345>>