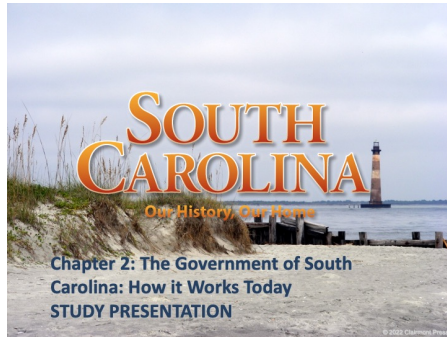


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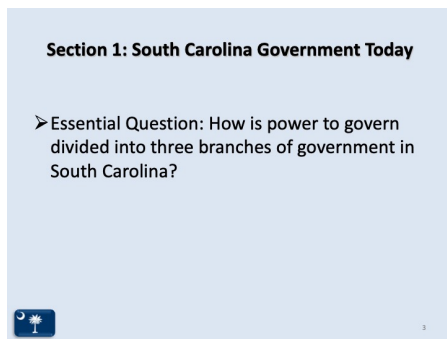
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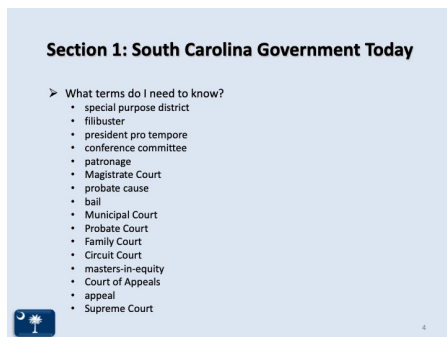
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South Carolina Government Today

- Government: the means by which a society makes and enforces decisions about how its people must behave.
- Levels of government: National, State, Local
- Authoritarian rule: monarchy, aristocracy, oligarchy, dictatorship
- Democracy: rule by the people
- South Carolina government is representative with three branches of power.
- Each branch has a way to hold back (check) and balance the power of the other branches.




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**The Legislative Branch:
The General Assembly**

- Makes laws, raises money (revenue) by taxes, fees, and fines, and spends the state's money
- Controls many parts of our lives: schools, roads, restaurant sanitation, air quality, etc.


	House of Representatives	Senate
Age to be Elected	21	25
Number of Members	124	46
Length of Term (years)	2	4
Maximum Terms	None	None



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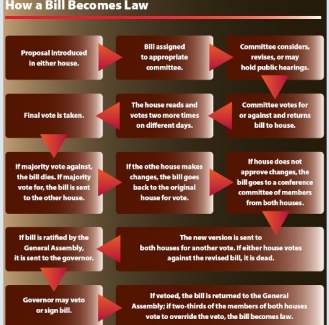
**The Legislative Branch:
The General Assembly**

- filibuster: a special rule in the senate that allows a member or small group of members to have unlimited debate or speech; this can hold up or kill a bill.
- All revenue bills must start in the House of Representatives.
- Most work done in committees
- House has 11 committees; the Senate 15
- Committee leaders are very powerful.
- Lieutenant Governor is leader of the Senate; can only vote in case of tie
- The House is led by a Speaker, chosen from the members; a very powerful position in South Carolina



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How a Bill Becomes Law




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**The Legislative Branch:
The General Assembly**

- Other duties: electing judges, appointing boards and commissions, approving governor's appointments
- Oversight duties: makes sure acts are being carried out and money spent correctly




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The Executive Branch: The Governor

- Carries out the laws passed by the General Assembly and acts as spokesperson for the state; submits budget to the General Assembly, selects some department heads
- South Carolina has a history of limiting the power of the governor.
- Can serve two four-year terms
- Must be a U.S. citizen, at least 33 years old, and lived in S.C. for at least five years




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The Executive Branch: The Governor

- The governor has special powers in a crisis such as a riot or disaster.
- Can call out the National Guard
- Can veto acts of the General Assembly
- Governors use their personality and political skills to get work done.
- One-third of the budget comes from the federal government to support health care for children and the elderly. The governor has much control over these funds.



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The Judicial Branch: The Courts

- This branch is led by the chief justice of the South Carolina Supreme Court.
- There are four tiers (levels) of courts in the state.



South Carolina Supreme Court Building



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Tier	Court Name(s)	Duties & Jurisdiction
Top Tier	Supreme Court	hears appeals from lower courts, admits new attorneys to the practice of law, sets standards of behavior for the profession, disciplines lawyers and judges who are unethical
Third Tier	Court of Appeals	hears appeals from circuit and family court
Second Tier	Family Court	divorce, child custody and visitation, alimony, property settlements, and termination of parental rights
	Circuit Court	all cases not heard first tier courts and appeals from those courts
Lower Tier	Masters-in-Equity	property cases
	Magistrate, Municipal	traffic violations, minor criminal and civil cases, hearings for more serious cases and setting bail, search and arrest warrants
	Probate	wills and estates, guardianships, marriages

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The Judicial Branch: The Courts

- The Supreme Court has a chief justice and four associate justices.
- Elected for 10 year terms by General Assembly
- No limit on re-election
- New judges face a screening
- Judicial branch more independent from the legislature than in the past



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The Concept of Democracy

- “Democracy” means rule by the people.
- Democratic ideals include:
 - freedom of speech, press, worship, and assembly
 - respect of the rights of others
 - equity before the law
 - trial by jury
 - majority rule with protection of minority rights
 - voting to decide issues or elect representatives to govern
 - right to vote
 - responsibility of citizens to participate



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Section 2: Local Government and You, the Citizen

- Essential Question: What are my rights and responsibilities in local government?



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Section 2: Local Government and You, the Citizen

➤ What terms do I need to know?

- incorporated
- municipality
- political party
- special interest group
- lobbyist
- United States Constitution
- Bill of Rights



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Counties

➤ There are over 800 local governments in South Carolina (46 counties, 269 towns and cities, 85 school districts, etc.)

➤ Counties keep records (e.g. births, deaths, etc.), maintain roads, enforce laws, and operate courts.

➤ Counties are run by councils elected by citizens.



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Municipalities & School Districts


➤ Municipalities (towns, cities) are run by a city council and mayor.

➤ Larger cities have a city manager appointed by the city council to run the city.

➤ School districts support area schools.

➤ School districts are usually run by a school board who hires a superintendent.

➤ Schools are funded by local, state, and federal tax money.



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Special Purpose Districts


➤ 498 Special Purpose Districts

➤ Boards for these districts are appointed.

➤ Examples are fire protection, conservation, sanitation, water, gas, airports, and emergency services.

➤ An individual could not provide all of these services.

➤ Government is a human intervention to help meet citizens' needs.



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Politics and Political Parties

- Political Party: group of people with similar ideas about how the government should be run
- Party members work together to get their candidates elected.
- Democrats and Republicans are the two main parties in South Carolina.




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Special Interest Groups and Lobbyists


- Special Interest Group: a group concerned with one particular set of political issues.
- Such groups try to convince legislators to vote in a way to support the group's point of view.
- Lobbyist: a person hired by a special interest group to influence lawmakers' decisions.
- Ethics laws have been designed to prevent lobbyists from bribing lawmakers.

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You as a Citizen

- The United States Constitution established a government that defends your rights and maintains law and order and defense of the nation.
- The Bill of Rights lists many of our citizens' most important rights.
- It is your responsibility as a citizen to obey laws, defend the nation, tell the truth, follow the terms of contracts, and pay taxes.
- At any age, citizens can work to make a better community.



Link: [National Archives](#)

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