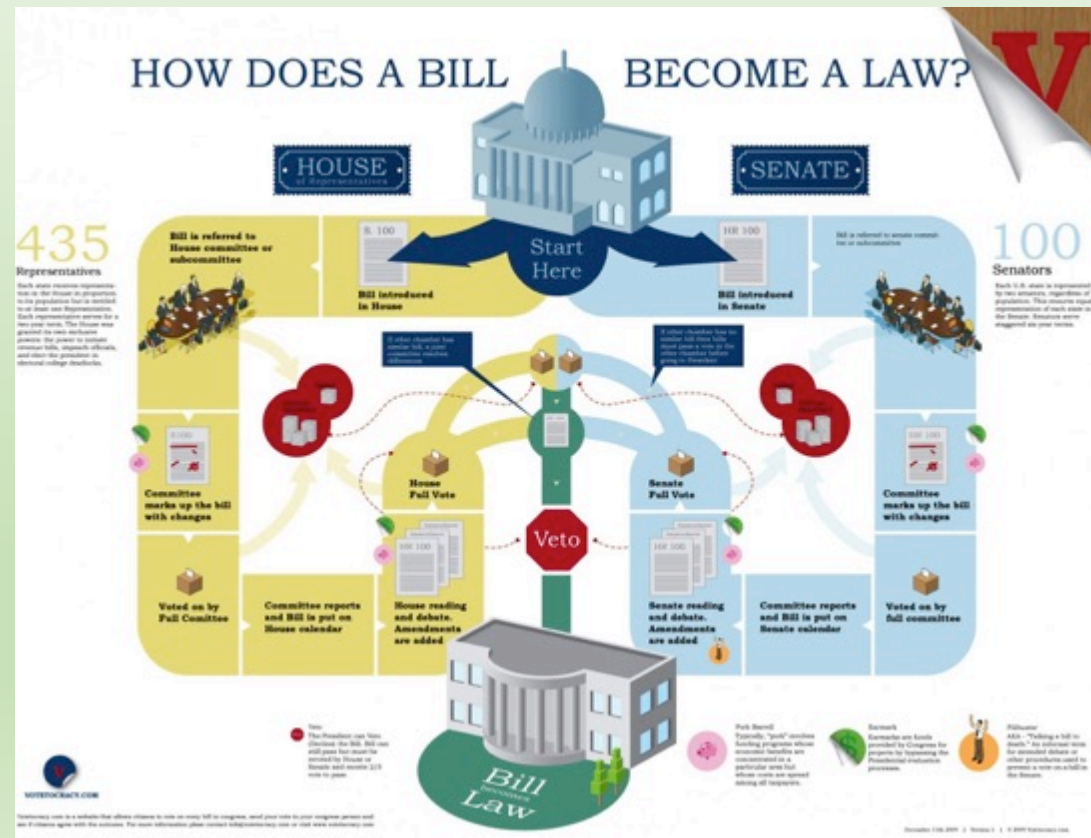


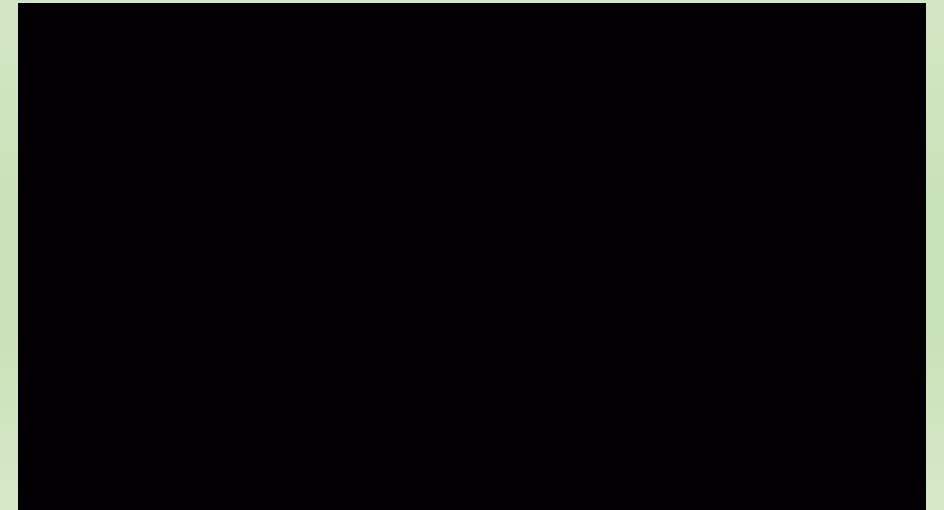
Unit 3: The Legislative Branch

Lesson 3.5 – How a Bill Becomes a Law

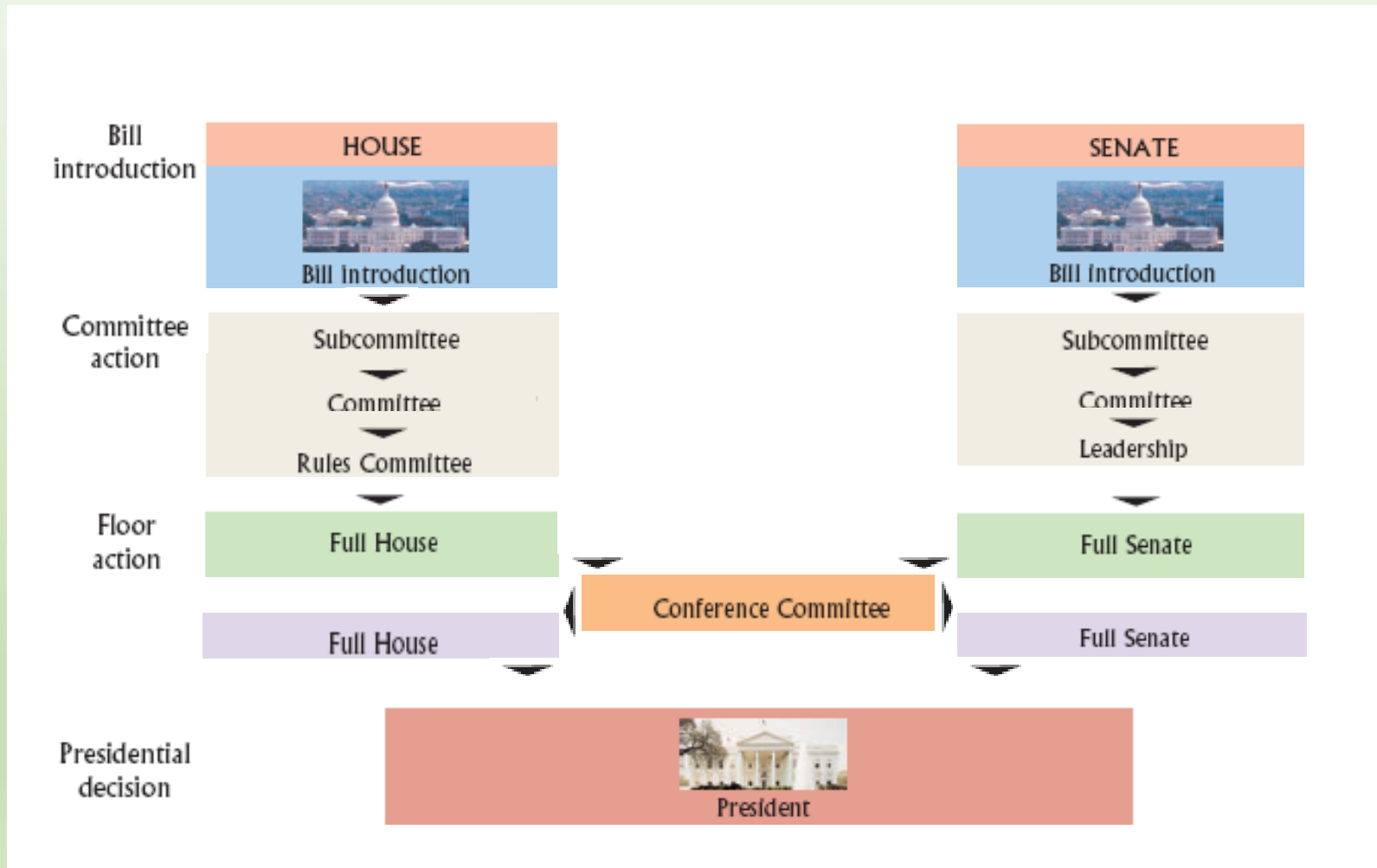


The Congressional Process

- Legislation:
 - Bill: a proposed law
 - Anyone can draft a bill, but only members of Congress can introduce them.
 - More rules in the House than in the Senate
 - Party leaders play a vital role in steering bills through both houses, but less in the Senate
 - Countless influences on the legislative process



The Congressional Process



The Congressional Process

- Presidents and Congress: Partners and Protagonists
 - Presidents attempt to persuade Congress that what they want is what Congress wants.
 - Presidents have many resources to influence Congress.
 - But to succeed, the president must win at least 10 times. From subcommittees to the floor of each house.
 - Ultimately, presidential leadership of Congress is at the margins. Facilitator in Chief.



The Congressional Process

- Party, Constituency, and Ideology
 - Party Influence:
 - Party leaders cannot force party members to vote a particular way, but many do vote along party lines.
 - Constituency versus Ideology
 - Prime determinant of member's vote on most issues is ideology
 - On most issues that are not salient (not noticeable or important), legislators may ignore constituency opinion.
 - But on controversial issues, members are wise to heed constituent opinion.
 - Why?



The Congressional Process

- Lobbyists and Interest Groups
 - There are 35,000 registered lobbyists trying to influence Congress—the bigger the issue, the more lobbyists will be working on it.
 - Lobbyists try to influence legislators' votes.
 - Lobbyists can be ignored, shunned and even regulated by Congress.
 - Ultimately, it is a combination of lobbyists and others that influence legislators' votes.



(Illustration: James T. Pendergrast)

