**Bicameral Congress: A Comparison of Houses**

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| **115th Congress** | **House of Representatives** | **Senate** |
| Type | Lower house--to respond to the needs of the people faster since they only have a two year term. Laws dealing with revenue must start in the House. | Upper house--The six year term means the Senate can be slower and consider the long term effects of laws. |
| New session started | January 3, 2017 | |
| Term limits | None | |
| Length of term | 2 years | 6 years |
| Turnover | All 435 seats are up for reelection every two years & there is more turnover. | Here there is a continuous body idea & less turnover. Only 1/3 of the senate seats are elected every two years. So only 34 or 33 senators are up for election at one time. |
| Next election | November 6, 2018 | |
| Seats | 438 voting members, including 6 non-voting members from D.C. | 100 |
| Seats apportioned | Based on the population of each state as outlined in the Virginia Plan | Two for each state as outlined in the New Jersey Plan |
| Speaker | Elected by the House of Representatives, usually based on seniority. The current Speaker of the House is Paul Ryan (R) | Vice President Joe Biden is President of the Senate. He only votes in case of a tie. When the Vice President is not available, the President Pro-tempore, a senator elected by the Senate, takes over. The current Pro-tempore is Orrin Hatch (R) |
| Majority Leader | Kevin McCarthy (R) | Mitch McConnell (R) |
| Minority Leader | Nancy Pelosi (D) | Chuck Schumer (D) |
| Political groups | Democratic (194), Republican (241) | Democratic (46), Independent (2), Republican (52) |

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