



# Congress For Dummies

*David Silverberg*

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## **Congress For Dummies** David Silverberg

*Congress For Dummies* helps you sort out what Congress does on a daily basis and what it all means to you, the citizen. It shows you how to get organized, make your voice heard, and influence legislation that might affect you. Full of helpful resources such as contact information for House and Senate offices, and smart, straightforward explanations of the legislative process, this book is everything you need to understand Congress and get involved in your government.

Whether you just want to know how government works, or you want to get involved to change your country, this simple guide covers all the ins and outs of Congress. It's a nonpartisan look at Congress that includes forewords by Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert and Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle. Inside you'll find easy explanations and helpful tips on how to:

- Get involved in the democratic process
- Influence legislation that's important to you
- Understand Congress and the media
- Contact your senators and representatives
- Check out Congress in action, in person
- Deal with congressional staff

Expert author David Silverberg — Managing Editor and a columnist at the Washington weekly *The Hill* — takes the mystery out of getting something done in Congress, introducing you to the players and explaining everything from legislation and lobbying to caucuses and coalitions. Written with the citizen advocate in mind, this helpful guide gives regular people the tools and knowledge they need to achieve their aims. Inside, you'll discover:

- How the three branches of government work together
- How to register your opinion with your elected officials
- How the legislative process works — from idea to law
- How debates, conferences, and vetoes work
- How budgeting and appropriations work
- How to get the most effect from your political contributions
- How the lobbying process works
- How to advocate for legislation
- How to deal with congressional staffers
- How to make use of congressional services

Getting something done in the messy confusion of democracy and bureaucracy is no easy task. Full of the kind of information and knowledge that Washington insiders take for granted, *Congress For Dummies* levels the playing field so that regular people — just like you — can make a difference, too.

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