

Congress In A Flash Answers

Congress in a *FLASH*

Name: _____

The Powers of Congress

The Constitution also lists the powers Congress has that the other branches and the individual states do not have. These are called **enumerated**, expressed, or listed powers. The Constitution doesn't necessarily say how each power should be used—just that they belong to the legislative branch. This can create controversy about what Congress is actually allowed to do. Depending on how you count them, there are between 17 and 35 individual powers on the list. Here are a few:

- Create rules on how to become a citizen
- Collect taxes, pay debts, and borrow money
- Regulate commerce (trade) between the states and with other countries
- Coin money and punish counterfeiters
- Punish pirates (!)
- Establish post offices, protect patents and copyrights
- Create lower federal courts
- Declare war, raise and support an Army and Navy
- Make any other laws that are "necessary and proper" to carry out the powers in this list



So, what about the law making?

The members of the House and Senate have a really important job. They are in charge of making the laws that run this country! Representatives and Senators are called *legislators* because they have the unique power to write bills, or *legislation*, that could become laws. How is a law made? It starts with having an idea about how to deal with a problem facing the country. Then there is a lot of research, conversation, compromise, and more conversation!

Congress in a Flash: Answers to Your Burning Questions

Are you overwhelmed by the complexities of the United States Congress? Do you need quick, concise answers to understand its structure, functions, and current events? You've come to the right place! This comprehensive guide, "Congress in a Flash: Answers to Your Burning Questions," provides a streamlined overview of the legislative branch, addressing key aspects in an easily digestible format. We'll unpack the intricacies of the Senate and House of Representatives, explore their powers, and highlight crucial processes to empower you with a solid understanding of how Congress works. Get ready to become a more informed citizen in a flash!

H2: Understanding the Structure of Congress

The United States Congress is a bicameral legislature, meaning it consists of two chambers: the Senate and the House of Representatives. This division of power is a cornerstone of the American system of checks and balances.

H3: The House of Representatives

The House is composed of 435 members, with each representative elected to serve a two-year term representing a specific congressional district within their state. The number of representatives each state receives is based on its population. The House holds the power of impeachment, the formal accusation of wrongdoing against a government official.

H4: Key House Responsibilities

Initiating all revenue bills (taxation).
Impeaching federal officials.
Passing legislation.

H3: The Senate

The Senate comprises 100 members, two from each state, each serving a six-year term. The Senate confirms presidential appointments, ratifies treaties, and holds the power to try impeachment cases. This longer term and representation based on states aims to provide more stability and a broader perspective.

H4: Key Senate Responsibilities:

Confirming presidential nominations (judges, cabinet members, etc.).
Ratifying treaties.
Trying impeachment cases.
Passing legislation.

H2: How a Bill Becomes a Law: A Simplified Process

The legislative process is often perceived as complicated, but understanding the basic steps makes it more accessible. A bill (proposed law) can originate in either the House or the Senate, except for revenue bills, which must start in the House.

H3: Steps in the Legislative Process:

1. Introduction: A bill is introduced and assigned a number.
2. Committee Action: The bill is referred to a relevant committee for review, hearings, and potential amendments.
3. Floor Debate & Vote: If the committee approves the bill, it moves to the full chamber for debate

and a vote.

4. Second Chamber: If passed by one chamber, it moves to the other for the same process.

Differences between the two chambers' versions are resolved in a conference committee.

5. Presidential Action: Once both chambers approve the identical bill, it is sent to the President. The President can sign it into law, veto it (which can be overridden by a two-thirds vote in both chambers), or take no action (which allows it to become law after 10 days, excluding Sundays).

H2: Key Powers of Congress

Congress possesses significant powers granted by the Constitution, including:

Legislative Power: The power to make laws.

Fiscal Power: The power to tax, spend, and borrow money.

War Power: The power to declare war.

Impeachment Power: The power to impeach and remove federal officials.

Regulatory Power: The power to regulate interstate commerce and other aspects of national life.

Judicial Power: The power to establish lower federal courts.

H2: Current Congressional Events & Issues

Staying informed about current events and pressing issues facing Congress is crucial for active citizenship. Regularly consult reputable news sources for updates on ongoing legislation, debates, and political maneuvering.

H2: Finding Reliable Information about Congress

Numerous resources provide reliable information about Congress. Official government websites, such as [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov), offer access to bills, legislative records, and committee information.

Reputable news organizations and non-partisan research groups provide insightful analysis and commentary.

Conclusion

Understanding Congress is key to understanding American government. This "Congress in a Flash" guide provides a concise overview of its structure, functions, and processes. By staying informed

about current events and utilizing reliable information sources, you can become a more engaged and effective participant in our democratic system. Remember to continuously seek out updated information to stay abreast of the dynamic nature of the legislative process.

FAQs

1. What is the difference between a bill and a law? A bill is a proposed law, while a law is a bill that has been passed by both houses of Congress and signed by the President (or allowed to become law without signature).
2. How can I contact my representative or senator? You can find contact information for your representatives on the House and Senate websites (house.gov and senate.gov).
3. What is a filibuster? A filibuster is a tactic used in the Senate to delay or block a vote on a bill by extending debate indefinitely.
4. What is a committee hearing? A committee hearing is a meeting held by a congressional committee to gather information and testimony related to a bill or other legislative matter.
5. How can I track the progress of a specific bill? You can track the progress of bills through Congress.gov by searching for the bill's number.

congress in a flash answers: *Congressional Record* United States. Congress, 1968

congress in a flash answers: *Congressional Intern Handbook* Sue Grabowski, Congressional Management Foundation (U.S.), 1996

congress in a flash answers: Learn about the United States U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2009 Learn About the United States is intended to help permanent residents gain a deeper understanding of U.S. history and government as they prepare to become citizens. The product presents 96 short lessons, based on the sample questions from which the civics portion of the naturalization test is drawn. An audio CD that allows students to listen to the questions, answers, and civics lessons read aloud is also included. For immigrants preparing to naturalize, the chance to learn more about the history and government of the United States will make their journey toward citizenship a more meaningful one.

congress in a flash answers: Flash , 1991

congress in a flash answers: Civics Flash Cards for the Naturalization Test , 2012 USCIS
Civics flash cards: These Civics flash card will help immigrants learn about US history and government while preparing for naturalization test. These flash cards can also be used in the classroom as an instruction tool for citizenship preparation. Important note: on the naturalization test, some answers may change because of elections or appointments. Applicants must be aware of the most current answers to these questions. Applicants must answer these questions with the name of the official who is serving at the time of his or her eligibility interview with the USCIS. The USCIS officer will not accept an incorrect answer.

congress in a flash answers: Civics Flash Cards for the New Naturalization Test , 2009
Includes the 100 civics (history and government) questions and answers for the new naturalization test.

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Congressional Record is the official record of the proceedings and debates of the United States Congress. It is published daily when Congress is in session. The Congressional Record began publication in 1873. Debates for sessions prior to 1873 are recorded in The Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States (1789-1824), the Register of Debates in Congress (1824-1837), and the Congressional Globe (1833-1873)

congress in a flash answers: Discover Politics: Flash Peter Joyce, 2011-06-24 The books in this bite-sized new series contain no complicated techniques or tricky materials, making them ideal for the busy, the time-pressured or the merely curious. Discover Politics is a short, simple and to-the-point guide to politics. In just 96 pages, the reader will learn about different forms of government, different political ideologies and the running of a state. Ideal for the busy, the time-pressured or the merely curious, Discover Politics is a quick, no-effort way to break into this fascinating topic.

congress in a flash answers: The Federal Budget Allen Schick, 2008-05-31 The federal budget impacts American policies both at home and abroad, and recent concern over the exploding budgetary deficit has experts calling our nation's policies unsustainable and system-dooming. As the deficit continues to grow, will America be fully able to fund its priorities, such as an effective military and looking after its aging population? In this third edition of his classic book The Federal Budget, Allen Schick examines how surpluses projected during the final years of the Clinton presidency turned into oversized deficits under George W. Bush. In his detailed analysis of the politics and practices surrounding the federal budget, Schick addresses issues such as the collapse of the congressional budgetary process and the threat posed by the termination of discretionary spending caps. This edition updates and expands his assessment of the long-term budgetary outlook, and it concludes with a look at how the nation's deficit will affect America now and in the future. A clear explanation of the federal budget... [Allen Schick] has captured the politics of federal budgeting from the original lofty goals to the stark realities of today.—Pete V. Domenici, U.S. Senate

congress in a flash answers: Introduction to Public Forum and Congressional Debate Jeffrey Hannan, Benjamin Berkman, Chad Meadows, 2012 Conceived and written by three of the most successful and talented National Forensic League coaches and educators, this text brings together current best practices for Public Forum and Congressional Debate.

congress in a flash answers: Flash: The Haunting of Barry Allen Susan Griffith, Clay Griffith, 2016-11-29 Following the supercharged, crime-fighting superhero with the power to move at superhuman speeds, this first Flash adventure pits the Scarlet Speedster against the villains who comprise his metahuman Rogues Gallery. But when The Flash's own abilities begin to fail him, he must seek help from his closest ally - The Arrow. This two-part adventure based on characters from DC Comics will cross directly into the next Arrow novel.

congress in a flash answers: Principles of Federal Appropriations Law , 2004

congress in a flash answers: Prophecy Flash! , 1999

congress in a flash answers: Congress David R. Mayhew, 2004-11-10 Any short list of major analyses of Congress must of necessity include David Mayhew's Congress: The Electoral Connection. —Fred Greenstein In this second edition to a book that has achieved canonical status, David R. Mayhew argues that the principal motivation of legislators is reelection and that the pursuit of this goal affects the way they behave and the way that they make public policy. In a new foreword for this edition, R. Douglas Arnold discusses why the book revolutionized the study of Congress and how it has stood the test of time.

congress in a flash answers: Expect No help: the life and times of Jumpin` Jack Flash Cesspool Jones, 2013-05-21 Expect No Help' is a non-fiction novel that depicts America from the 1960's up to now through the eyes of someone who was there...and still is...sometimes. It shows most anyone who reads this how to grow up (author's point of view), even coming up in the 60's and 70's. Much change happened from then till now...with the word change now reduced to a 4-letter word...along with the word power. This novel is all about the future of this country at the grass-roots level. That means 'old school America' ain't goin` anywhere soon...if at all! However, this novel looks

at 'new school America' with only slight skepticism, only for the fact...change makes the world go 'round. Without change, the world turns stagnant. However, once again, What do you want to change into? This novel does a pretty good job in trying to decipher that question, leaving no stone unturned...with an open-minded and also a one-sided opinion. That is not easy to do. There is absolutely no 'political correctness' what-so-ever in this novel and could be considered toxic to people with narrow-minded beliefs. This novel don't care...but with tact. It is written somewhat off of the streets in a language that anyone...from a stoner to a P.H.D can understand. The very first part of the book vaguely states what the novel is all about and if that's gonna be a rough ride for you...wear a helmet while reading it or find something else to do.

congress in a flash answers: Inquiry Into the U.S.S. Pueblo and EC-121 Plane Incidents United States. Congress. House. Committee on Armed Services. Special Subcommittee on the U.S.S. Pueblo, 1969 Committee Serial No. 10. Investigates the events leading up to, the actual event, and the responsibility for the seizure of the U.S.S. Pueblo by North Korea. Includes discussion of the applicability of the Military Code of Conduct to the activities of the members of the Pueblo while in North Korean custody. Includes the Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, Aug. 12, 1949 (p. 1089-1170).

congress in a flash answers: Congressional Record , 1875

congress in a flash answers: Congress For Dummies David Silverberg, 2011-03-10 A clear, direct guide into the nitty-gritty workings of Congress and the way the institution really functions 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.

congress in a flash answers: Congressional Record Index , 1954 Includes history of bills and resolutions.

congress in a flash answers: Biblio-flash , 1989

congress in a flash answers: Hearings, Reports and Prints of the House Committee on Armed Services United States. Congress. House. Committee on Armed Services,

congress in a flash answers: Hearings United States. Congress. House. Committee on Armed Services, 1969

congress in a flash answers: Advances in Sulfide Smelting Hong Yong Sohn, David B.

George, Alan D. Zunkel, 1983

congress in a flash answers: Flash Count Diary Darcey Steinke, 2019-06-18 “Many days I believe menopause is the new (if long overdue) frontier for the most compelling and necessary philosophy; Darcey Steinke is already there, blazing the way. This elegant, wise, fascinating, deeply moving book is an instant classic. I’m about to buy it for everyone I know.” —Maggie Nelson, author of *The Argonauts* A brave, brilliant, and unprecedented examination of menopause Menopause hit Darcey Steinke hard. First came hot flashes. Then insomnia. Then depression. As she struggled to express what was happening to her, she came up against a culture of silence. Throughout history, the natural physical transition of menopause has been viewed as something to deny, fear, and eradicate. Menstruation signals fertility and life, and childbirth is revered as the ultimate expression of womanhood. Menopause is seen as a harbinger of death. Some books Steinke found promoted hormone replacement therapy. Others encouraged acceptance. But Steinke longed to understand menopause in a more complex, spiritual, and intellectually engaged way. In *Flash Count Diary*, Steinke writes frankly about aspects of Menopause that have rarely been written about before. She explores the changing gender landscape that comes with reduced hormone levels, and lays bare the transformation of female desire and the realities of prejudice against older women. Weaving together her personal story with philosophy, science, art, and literature, Steinke reveals that in the seventeenth century, women who had hot flashes in front of others could be accused of being witches; that the model for Duchamp's famous *Étant donnés* was a post-reproductive woman; and that killer whales—one of the only other species on earth to undergo menopause—live long post-reproductive lives. *Flash Count Diary*, with its deep research, open play of ideas, and reverence for the female body, will change the way you think about menopause. It's a deeply feminist book—honest about the intimations of mortality that menopause brings while also arguing for the ascendancy, beauty, and power of the post-reproductive years.

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congress in a flash answers: Outdoor Recreation Action United States. Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, 1973

congress in a flash answers: Successful Marketing of the Swan Label , 2007

congress in a flash answers: The Federalist Papers Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, James Madison, 2018-08-20 Classic Books Library presents this brand new edition of “The Federalist Papers”, a collection of separate essays and articles compiled in 1788 by Alexander Hamilton. Following the United States Declaration of Independence in 1776, the governing doctrines and policies of the States lacked cohesion. “The Federalist”, as it was previously known, was constructed by American statesman Alexander Hamilton, and was intended to catalyse the ratification of the United States Constitution. Hamilton recruited fellow statesmen James Madison Jr., and John Jay to write papers for the compendium, and the three are known as some of the Founding Fathers of the United States. Alexander Hamilton (c. 1755–1804) was an American lawyer, journalist and highly influential government official. He also served as a Senior Officer in the Army between 1799–1800 and founded the Federalist Party, the system that governed the nation’s finances. His contributions to the Constitution and leadership made a significant and lasting impact on the early development of the nation of the United States.

congress in a flash answers: Click! Flash! Barbara Applin, Dr. N. Viswanathan, 1988 This is a story about a young boy with a camera - an adventure story with a gentle introduction to taking photographs. It is part of a collection of stories, rhymes and fact books for the Caribbean market, both for school libraries and for reading at home. The series moves on from stories told in simple sentences with basic grammatical structures (HOP), through freer use of language (STEP) to the level of reading reached at the end of primary school (JUMP). From these varied and individual books a child can choose one that challenges his or her reading skill.

congress in a flash answers: How to Give Effective Feedback to Your Students, Second Edition Susan M. Brookhart, 2017-03-10 Properly crafted and individually tailored feedback on student work boosts student achievement across subjects and grades. In this updated and expanded

second edition of her best-selling book, Susan M. Brookhart offers enhanced guidance and three lenses for considering the effectiveness of feedback: (1) does it conform to the research, (2) does it offer an episode of learning for the student and teacher, and (3) does the student use the feedback to extend learning? In this comprehensive guide for teachers at all levels, you will find information on every aspect of feedback, including • Strategies to uplift and encourage students to persevere in their work. • How to formulate and deliver feedback that both assesses learning and extends instruction. • When and how to use oral, written, and visual as well as individual, group, or whole-class feedback. • A concise and updated overview of the research findings on feedback and how they apply to today's classrooms. In addition, the book is replete with examples of good and bad feedback as well as rubrics that you can use to construct feedback tailored to different learners, including successful students, struggling students, and English language learners. The vast majority of students will respond positively to feedback that shows you care about them and their learning. Whether you teach young students or teens, this book is an invaluable resource for guaranteeing that the feedback you give students is engaging, informative, and, above all, effective.

congress in a flash answers: *Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure* Paul Mason, 2020

congress in a flash answers: *Take Up Space* The Editors of New York Magazine, 2022-02-22 A stunning four-color biography of Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez in the bestselling tradition of Notorious RBG and Pelosi that explores her explosive rise and impact on the future of American culture and politics. The candidate was young—twenty-eight years old, a child of Puerto Rico, the Bronx, and Yorktown Heights. She was working as a waitress and bartender. She was completely unknown, and taking on a ten-term incumbent in a city famous for protecting its political institutions. “Women like me aren’t supposed to run for office,” Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez said in a video launching her campaign, the camera following her as she hastily pulled her hair into a bun. But she did. And in perhaps the most stunning upset in recent memory, she won. At twenty-nine, she was sworn in as the youngest member of the 116th Congress and became the youngest woman to serve as a representative in United States history. Before long, Ocasio-Cortez had earned her own shorthand title—AOC—and was one of the most talked-about public figures (loved and loathed) in the world. Her natural ability to connect with everyday people through the social media feeds grew her following into the multimillions. Every statement she made, every tweet and Instagram Live, went viral, and her term had barely begun before people were speculating that she could one day be president. The question seemed to be on everyone’s mind: How did this woman come from nowhere to acquire such influence, and so fast? Now, in *Take Up Space*, that question is answered through a kaleidoscopic biography by the editors of New York magazine that features the riveting account of her rise by Lisa Miller, an essay by Rebecca Traister that explains why she is an unprecedented figure in American politics, and multiform explorations (reportage, comic, history, analysis, photography) of AOC’s outsize impact on American culture and politics. Throughout, AOC is revealed in all her power and vulnerability, and understood in the context of the fast-changing America that made her possible—and perhaps even inevitable.

congress in a flash answers: Library Patrons' Privacy Sandra J. Valenti, Brady D. Lund, Matthew A. Beckstrom, 2022-01-11 A quick, easy-to-read synthesis of theory, guidelines, and evidence-based research, this book offers timely, practical guidance for library and information professionals who must navigate ethical crises in information privacy and stay on top of emerging privacy trends. Emerging technologies create new concerns about information privacy within library and information organizations, and many information professionals lack guidance on how to navigate the ethical crises that emerge when information privacy and library policy clash. What should we do when a patron leaves something behind? How do we justify filtering internet access while respecting accessibility and privacy? How do we balance new technologies that provide anonymity with the library's need to prevent the illegal use of their facilities? *Library Patrons' Privacy* presents clear, conversational, evidence-based guidance on how to navigate these ethical questions in information privacy. Ideas from professional organizations, government entities, scholarly publications, and personal experiences are synthesized into an approachable guide for librarians at all stages of their

career. This guide, designed by three experienced LIS scholars and professionals, is a quick and enjoyable read that students and professionals of all levels of technical knowledge and skill will find useful and applicable to their libraries.

congress in a flash answers: *Dare to be Creative!* Madeleine L'Engle, 1984

congress in a flash answers: Constitutional Chaos Andrew P. Napolitano, 2004 In this alarming book, Fox News commentator Judge Napolitano makes the solid case that there is a pernicious and ever-expanding pattern of government abuse in America's criminal justice system, leading him to establish his general creed: The government is not your friend. As an attorney, a law professor, a commentator, a judge, and now a successful television personality, Judge Napolitano has studied the system inside and out, and his unique voice has resonance and relevance. In this sensational book, Napolitano sets the record straight, speaking frankly from his own experiences and investigation about how government agencies will often arrest without warrant, spy without legal authority, imprison without charge, and kill without cause.

congress in a flash answers: Examples & Explanations for First Amendment Laura E. Little, 2021-03-09 Award-winning teacher and respected author of several volumes, Professor Laura Little has written a new book on the First Amendment. Following the proven Examples and Explanations format, the book covers all of the amendment's major topics - with emphasis on speech and religion. Professor Little presents hypothetical examples that range from simple and straightforward to complex and rich. As a result, students using the book can acquire both basic and advanced knowledge of First Amendment doctrine. Equally important, this approach allows students the opportunity to practice their skill of marshalling arguments on many sides of contested legal issues. With its short chapters, the book is an exceptionally useful complement to any of the available casebooks in the field. Highlights of this E&E study aid (first edition): Professor Little brings her characteristically clear writing style and constitutional law expertise to the subject. The book's organization enables students to choose the particular topics they need to study and that match the coverage of their course. The topics covered include a comprehensive review of the most recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions on speech, association, and religion as well as cutting edge issues raised by current events, including the COVID-19 pandemic. The concise explication of legal doctrine (and its uncertainties) ensure a baseline of student understanding and maximizes accessibility to difficult, abstract concepts. The book's balance between simple and complex hypotheticals serves an array of student needs. While providing deep coverage of abstract concepts, the book includes many practical introductions to law practice reality. Professor Little has not only established her reputation as a constitutional scholar, but also comes to the subject with experience as a practicing First Amendment lawyer for the media. Professors and students will benefit from: Adaptable organization allows the book to complement any casebook. Figures, examples, explanations, and varying difficulty in the presented material ensure that the book will serve the needs of a variety of users and will appeal to different learning styles. Balance between theoretical and practical materials enables broad understanding.

congress in a flash answers: Washington's Farewell Address George Washington, 1907

congress in a flash answers: 200 Notable Days Richard A. Baker, 2006 Comprised of 200 readable and informative historic vignettes reflecting all areas of Senate activities, from the well known and notorious to the unusual and whimsical. Prepared by Richard A. Baker, the Senates Historian, these brief sketches, each with an accompanying illustration and references for further reading, provide striking insights into the colorful and momentous history of The World's Greatest Deliberative Body. Review from Goodreads: Jason rated this book with 3 stars and had this to say This coffee table book on Senate History comes from none other than the U.S. Senate Historian, Richard Baker. The House of Representatives recently acquired noted historian of the Jacksonian era, Robert Remini as the official House Historian. He recently wrote a pretty impressive tomb on the House of Representatives. The Senate already has a 4 volume history written by US Senator, Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia, so the Senate could not reply in that manner. So, I think the coffee table book was the best that we could muster. I think this is the first time I have actually read a

coffee table book from cover to cover. It is a chatty little story book filled with useful cocktail-party-history of the US Senate. That's useful knowledge to me, as I never know what to say at Washington cocktail parties. Perhaps anecdotes about Thomas Hart Benton will help break the ice. The most striking thing to me about the book was the number of attacks on the Capitol. I had heard about all the incidents individually, but it is more jolting to see them sequentially. 3 bombings, 2 gun attacks and then the attempt on September 11th. In a way, it's remarkable that the Capitol complex remained so open for so long. Note, I use the past tense here. As any of you who have visited the capitol recently will have noted, it is increasingly difficult to get in. And once the Capitol Visitor Center is completed, I expect it will be very much a controlled experience like the White House. In any case, Baker's prose is breezy and he is dutifully reverent to the institution without missing the absurdities of Senate life. You also get a sense of the breakdown in lawfulness that preceded the Civil War. It's not just the canning of Charles Sumner, it's also the Mississippi Senator pulling a gun on Missouri Senator Thomas Hart Benton in the Senate chamber. Then there is the case of California Senator David Broderick (an anti-slavery Democrat) being killed in a duel by the pro-slavery Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court. Apparently, back in those days, California was a lot more like modern Texas. In any case, the slide toward anarchy can definitely be found long before Fort Sumter. Another interesting aside that I really never knew concerns the order of succession. All of us learn in school that it is the President, then the Vice President, then the Speaker of the House and then President Pro Tempore of the Senate. After that, you get the members of the Cabinet, and I was aware that as new departments were created, they have been shuffled up a bit. What I did not know, is that Congress was not always in the order of succession at all. For a long time, it devolved from the President to the VP and then directly to the Secretary of State. Furthermore, when they first inserted Congress, it was the President Pro Tempore of the Senate who was third in line over the Speaker of the House. The structure we all know and love was only finalized in 1947 after some hard thinking in light of FDR's demise and the Constitutional Amendments on succession that followed. Anyway, this is a book for government geeks. If you are one, it's a nice read and about as pleasant a way to introduce yourself to Senate history as I have found. If not, there are prettier coffee table books to be had.

Congress in a flash answers: H.R. 13715, National Weather Service Act of 1978 (successor to H.R. 8763) United States. Congress. House. Committee on Science and Technology. Subcommittee on Transportation, Aviation, and Weather, 1978

Congress in a flash answers: The Debate on NATO Enlargement United States. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations, 1998

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