

Chapter 6: Legislative Productivity in Congress and Workload

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Table 6-1

House Workload, 80th-115th Congresses, 1947-2018

Congress	Bills introduced ^a	Average no. of bills introduced per member	Bills passed	Ratio of bills passed to bills introduced	Recorded votes ^b	Time in session: Days ^f	Time in Session: Hours ^e	Hours per day in session	Committee, subcommittee meetings ^c
80th (1947-1948)	7,611	17.5	1,739	0.228	285	254	1,224	4.8	n.a.
81st (1949-1950)	10,502	24.1	2,482	0.236	543	341	1,501	4.4	n.a.
82nd (1951-1952)	9,065	20.8	2,008	0.222	364	274	1,163	4.2	n.a.
83rd (1953-1954)	10,875	25.0	2,129	0.196	271	226	1,033	4.6	n.a.
84th (1955-1956)	13,169	30.3	2,360	0.179	279	228	937	4.1	3,210
85th (1957-1958)	14,580	33.5	2,064	0.142	415	276	1,148	4.2	3,750
86th (1959-1960) ^d	14,112	32.3	1,636	0.116	382	271	1,039	3.8	3,059
87th (1961-1962) ^d	14,328	32.8	1,927	0.134	524	305	1,227	4.0	3,402
88th (1963-1964)	14,022	32.2	1,267	0.090	528	334	1,251	3.7	3,596
89th (1965-1966)	19,874	45.7	1,565	0.079	782	337	1,548	4.6	4,367
90th (1967-1968)	22,060	50.7	1,213	0.055	875	326	1,595	4.9	4,386
91st (1969-1971)	21,436	49.3	1,130	0.053	812	349	1,613	4.6	5,066
92nd (1971-1972)	18,561	42.7	970	0.052	934	298	1,429	4.8	5,114
93rd (1973-1974)	18,872	43.4	923	0.049	1,453	334	1,603	4.8	5,888
94th (1975-1976)	16,982	39.0	968	0.057	1,692	311	1,788	5.7	6,975
95th (1977-1978)	15,587	35.8	1,027	0.066	1,724	324	1,898	5.9	7,896
96th (1979-1980)	9,103	20.9	929	0.102	1,439	326	1,876	5.8	7,033
97th (1981-1982)	8,094	18.6	704	0.087	859	305	1,420	4.7	6,078
98th (1983-1984)	7,105	16.3	978	0.138	996	267	1,705	6.4	5,661
99th (1985-1986)	6,499	14.9	973	0.150	970	282	1,794	6.4	5,272
100th (1987-1988)	6,263	14.4	1,061	0.169	976	299	1,659	5.5	5,388
101st (1989-1990)	6,664	15.3	968	0.145	915	288	1,688	5.9	5,305
102nd (1991-1992)	6,775	15.6	932	0.138	932	278	1,796	6.5	5,152
103rd (1993-1994)	5,739	13.2	749	0.131	1,122	266	1,887	7.1	4,304
104th (1995-1996)	4,542	10.4	611	0.135	1,340	296	2,445	8.3	3,796
105th (1997-1998)	5,014	11.5	710	0.142	1,187	252	2,002	7.9	3,624
106th (1999-2000)	5,815	13.4	957	0.165	1,214	276	2,179	7.9	3,347
107th (2001-2002)	5,892	13.5	677	0.115	996	272	1,694	6.2	2,254
108th (2003-2004)	5,547	12.8	801	0.144	1,221	248	1,894	7.6	2,135
109th (2005-2006)	6,540	15.0	770	0.118	1,212	247	1,918	7.8	2,492
110th (2007-2008)	7,441	17.1	1,101	0.148	1,876	286	2,138	7.5	2,949
111th (2009-2010)	6,677	15.3	861	0.129	1,655	290	2,127	7.3	2,426
112th (2011-2012)	6,845	15.7	561	0.082	1,607	330	1,718	5.2	2,524
113th (2013-2014)	6,030	13.9	682	0.113	1,205	298	1,472	4.9	2,307
114th (2015-2016)	6,634	15.3	896	0.135	1,327	288	1,438	5.0	2,112
115th (2017-2018)	7,542	17.3	1,162	0.154	1,210	384	1,517	4.0	1,841

Note: Some data from earlier years/previous versions of Vital Statistics have been updated. See errata for more detail.

- a. This number includes all bills and joint resolutions introduced.
- b. This number includes all quorum calls, yea and nay votes, and recorded votes.
- c. Figures do not include the House Appropriations Committee for the 84th to 88th Congresses. House Appropriations Committee meetings included in subsequent Congresses numbered 584 in the 89th Congress, 705 in the 90th Congress, 709 in the 91st Congress, 854 in the 99nd Congress, and 892 in the 93rd Congress.
- d. The House of Representatives included 437 congressmen to reflect the addition of Alaska and Hawaii.
- e. Rounded to nearest hour.
- f. Days reflect the number of calendar days the House was in session.

Source: Congressional Record (thomas.loc.gov); Office of the Clerk, US House of Representatives; "Resume of Congressional Activity," Congressional Record, 80th Congress - 109th Congress; End of Session Committee Reports; Committee Websites; Office of the Historian - US House of Representatives.

Table 6-2

Senate Workload, 80th-115th Congresses, 1947-2018

Congress	Bills introduced ^a	Average no. of bills introduced per member	Bills passed	Ratio of bills passed to bills introduced	Recorded votes ^b	Time in session: Days	Time in session: Hours	Hours per day in session	Committee, subcommittee meetings ^c
80th (1947-1948)	3,186	33.2	1,670	0.524	248	257	1,462	5.7	n.a.
81st (1949-1950)	4,486	46.7	2,362	0.527	455	389	2,410	6.2	n.a.
82nd (1951-1952)	3,665	38.2	1,849	0.505	331	287	1,648	5.7	n.a.
83rd (1953-1954)	4,077	42.5	2,231	0.547	270	294	1,962	6.7	n.a.
84th (1955-1956)	4,518	47.1	2,550	0.564	224	224	1,362	6.1	2,607
85th (1957-1958)	4,532	47.2	2,202	0.486	313	271	1,876	6.9	2,748
86th (1959-1960)	4,149	41.5	1,680	0.405	422	280	2,199	7.9	2,271
87th (1961-1962)	4,048	40.5	1,953	0.482	434	323	2,164	6.7	2,532
88th (1963-1964)	3,457	34.6	1,341	0.388	541	375	2,395	6.4	2,493
89th (1965-1966)	4,129	41.3	1,636	0.396	497	345	1,814	5.3	2,889
90th (1967-1968)	4,400	44.0	1,376	0.313	595 ^d	358	1,961	5.5	2,892
91st (1969-1971)	4,867	48.7	1,271	0.261	667	384	2,352	6.1	3,264
92nd (1971-1972)	4,408	44.1	1,035	0.235	955	348	2,295	6.6	3,559
93rd (1973-1974)	4,524	45.2	1,115	0.246	1,138	352	2,152	6.1	4,067
94th (1975-1976)	4,115	41.2	1,038	0.252	1,311	320	2,210	6.9	4,265
95th (1977-1978)	3,800	38.0	1,070	0.282	1,156	337	2,510	7.4	3,960
96th (1979-1980)	3,480	34.8	976	0.280	1,055	333	2,324	7.0	3,790
97th (1981-1982)	3,396	34.0	786	0.231	966	312	2,160	6.9	3,236
98th (1983-1984)	3,454	34.5	936	0.271	673	281	1,951	6.9	2,471
99th (1985-1986)	3,386	33.9	940	0.278	740	313	2,531	8.1	2,373
100th (1987-1988)	3,325	33.3	1,002	0.301	799	307	2,342	7.6	2,493
101st (1989-1990)	3,669	36.7	980	0.267	638	274	2,254	8.2	2,340 ^e
102nd (1991-1992)	3,738	37.4	947	0.253	550	287	2,292	8.0	2,039
103rd (1993-1994)	2,805	28.1	682	0.243	724	291	2,514	8.6	2,043
104th (1995-1996)	2,266	22.7	518	0.229	919	343	2,876	8.4	1,601
105th (1997-1998)	2,718	27.2	586	0.216	612	296	2,188	7.4	1,954
106th (1999-2000)	3,343	33.4	819	0.245	672	303	2,202	7.3	1,862
107th (2001-2002)	3,242	32.4	554	0.171	633	322	2,280	7.1	1,605
108th (2003-2004)	3,078	30.8	759	0.247	675	300	2,486	8.3	1,506
109th (2005-2006)	4,163	41.6	684	0.164	645	297	2,250	7.6	1,513
110th (2007-2008)	3,738	37.4	556	0.149	666	374	2,364	6.3	2,458
111th (2009-2010)	4,101	41.0	176	0.043	707	349	2,495	7.1	2,374
112th (2011-2012)	3,767	37.7	364	0.097	486	323	2,032	6.3	1,577
113th (2013-2014)	3,038	30.4	618	0.203	658	292	2,003	6.9	1,559
114th (2015-2016)	3,589	35.9	427	0.119	508	333	1,855	5.6	1,595
115th (2017-2018)	3,874	38.7	583	0.150	599	386	2,182	5.7	1,633

- a. This number includes all bills and joint resolutions introduced.
- b. This number includes all yea and nay votes.
- c. Figure includes all hearings and business meetings.
- d. This number does not include one yea and nay vote that was ruled invalid for lack of a quorum.
- e. Where final legislative calendars were not available, we compiled figures from Congressional Information Service Abstracts and the Congressional Record.

Source: Congressional Record (thomas.loc.gov); Office of the Secretary, US Senate; Senate Daily Digest; "Resume of Congressional Activity," Congressional Record, 80th Congress - 113th Congress. Congressional Record (thomas.loc.gov); End of Session Committee Reports; Committee Websites.

Table 6-3 Recorded Votes in the House and the Senate, 80th-115th Congresses, 1947-2018

Year	House	Senate	Year	House	Senate
1947	153	138	1983	533	381
1948	132	110	1984	463	292
1949	236	226	1985	482	381
1950	307	229	1986	488	359
1951	217	202	1987	511	420
1952	147	129	1988	465	379
1953	123	89	1989	379	312
1954	148	181	1990	536	326
1955	147	88	1991	444	280
1956	132	136	1992	488	270
1957	220	111	1993	615	395
1958	195	202	1994	507	329
1959	176	215	1995	885	613
1960	206	207	1996	455	306
1961	231	207	1997	640	298
1962	293	227	1998	547	314
1963	256	229	1999	611	374
1964	272	312	2000	603	298
1965	383	259	2001	512	380
1966	399	238	2002	484	253
1967	447	315	2003	677	459
1968	428	280 ^a	2004	544	216
1969	353	245	2005	671	366
1970	459	422	2006	541	279
1971	472	423	2007	1186	442
1972	462	532	2008	690	215
1973	726	594	2009	991	397
1974	727	544	2010	664	299
1975	828	611	2011	949	235
1976	864	700	2012	658	251
1977	782	636	2013	641	291
1978	942	520	2014	564	366
1979	758	509	2015	705	339
1980	681	546	2016	622	163
1981	371	497	2017	710	325
1982	488	469	2018	500	274

Note: House figures include the total number of quorum calls, yea and nay votes, and recorded votes, while Senate figures include only yea and nay votes.

a. This figure does not include one yea and nay vote that was ruled invalid for lack of a quorum.

Source: "Resume of Congressional Activity,"
Congressional Record, 80th Congress - 113th Congress.

Table 6-4

Congressional Workload, 80th-115th Congresses, 1947-2018

<i>Congress</i>	<i>Public Bills</i>			<i>Private bills</i>		
	<i>No. of bills enacted</i>	<i>Total pages of statutes</i>	<i>Average pages per statute</i>	<i>No. of bills enacted</i>	<i>Total pages of statutes</i>	<i>Average pages per statute</i>
80th (1947-1948)	906	2,236	2.5	458	182	0.40
81st (1949-1950)	921	2,314	2.5	1,103	417	0.38
82nd (1951-1952)	594	1,585	2.7	1,023	360	0.35
83rd (1953-1954)	781	1,899	2.4	1,002	365	0.36
84th (1955-1956)	1,028	1,848	1.8	893	364	0.41
85th (1957-1958)	936	2,435	2.6	784	349	0.45
86th (1959-1960)	800	1,774	2.2	492	201	0.41
87th (1961-1962)	885	2,078	2.3	684	255	0.37
88th (1963-1964)	666	1,975	3.0	360	144	0.40
89th (1965-1966)	810	2,912	3.6	473	188	0.40
90th (1967-1968)	640	2,304	3.6	362	128	0.35
91st (1969-1971)	695	2,927	4.2	246	104	0.42
92nd (1971-1972)	607	2,330	3.8	161	67	0.42
93rd (1973-1974)	649	3,443	5.3	123	48	0.39
94th (1975-1976)	588	4,121	7.0	141	75	0.53
95th (1977-1978)	634	5,403	8.5	170	60	0.35
96th (1979-1980)	613	4,947	8.1	123	63	0.51
97th (1981-1982)	473	4,343	9.2	56	25	0.45
98th (1983-1984)	623	4,893	7.9	52	26	0.50
99th (1985-1986)	664	7,198	10.8	24	13	0.54
100th (1987-1988)	713	4,839	6.8	48	29	0.60
101st (1989-1990)	650	5,767	8.9	16	9	0.56
102nd (1991-1992)	590	7,544	12.8	20	11	0.55
103rd (1993-1994)	465	7,553	16.2	8	9	1.13
104th (1995-1996)	333	6,369	19.1	4	4	1.00
105th (1997-1998)	394	7,269	18.4	10	11	1.10
106th (1999-2000)	580	5,045	8.7	24	35	1.46
107th (2001-2002)	377	5,584	14.8	6	8	1.33
108th (2003-2004)	498	6,923	13.9	6	11	1.83
109th (2005-2006)	482	7,323	15.2	1	1	1.00
110th (2007-2008)	460	7,689	16.72	0	0	0.00
111th (2009-2010)	383	7,617	19.89	2	6	3.00
112th (2011-2012)	283	4,415	15.60	1	2	2.00
113th (2013-2014)	296	5,289	17.87	0	0	0.00
114th (2015-2016)	329	6,170	18.75	0	0	0.00
115th (2017-2018)	442	7,872	17.81	1	1	1.00

Sources: *Federal Register*, Statutes Branch; The Library of Congress -- *THOMAS*, (<http://thomas.loc.gov>); United States Statutes at Large, Government Printing Office.

Most Recent Update Source: Resume of Congressional Activity, various years; *Federal Register*

Table 6-5 Pages in the *Federal Register*, 1936-2017

Year	Pages	Year	Pages
1936	2,355	1992	62,919
1946	14,736	1993	69,684
1956	10,528	1994	68,107
1966	16,850	1995	68,108
1969	20,464	1996	69,368
1971	25,442	1997	68,530
1972	28,920	1998	72,356
1973	35,586	1999	73,880
1974	45,422	2000	83,093
1975	60,221	2001	67,703
1976	57,072	2002	80,333
1977	63,629	2003	75,796
1978	61,261	2004	78,852
1979	77,497	2005	77,752
1980	87,012	2006	78,724
1981	63,554	2007	74,408
1982	58,493	2008	80,700
1983	57,703	2009	69,676
1984	50,997	2010	82,589
1985	53,479	2011	82,419
1986	47,418	2012	77,249
1987	49,654	2013	80,462
1988	53,376	2014	78,796
1989	53,821	2015	81,402
1990	53,618	2016	97,069
1991	67,715	2017	61,950

a. Although the number of pages is correctly given as 83,093, a page-numbering error on May 22, 2000 resulted in a 201-page "jump." Thus, the pages are (incorrectly) numbered up to 83,294.

Source: Federal Register.

Table 6-6

Vetoes and Overrides, 80th-115th Congresses, 1947-2018

Congress	Total no. of presidential vetoes	No. of regular vetoes	No. of pocket vetoes	Vetoes overridden		House attempts to override vetoes	Senate attempts to override vetoes
				Total	Percentage of regular vetoes		
80th (1947-1948)	75	42	33	6	14.3	8	8
81st (1949-1950)	79	70	9	3	4.3	5	5
82nd (1951-1952)	22	14	8	3	21.4	4	4
83rd (1953-1954)	52	21	31	0	0.0	0	0
84th (1955-1956)	34	12	22	0	0.0	1	1
85th (1957-1958)	51	18	33	0	0.0	1	1
86th (1959-1960)	44	22	22	2	9.1	5	6
87th (1961-1962)	20	11	9	0	0.0	0	0
88th (1963-1964)	9	5	4	0	0.0	0	0
89th (1965-1966)	14	10	4	0	0.0	0	0
90th (1967-1968)	8	2	6	0	0.0	0	0
91st (1969-1971)	11	7	4	2	28.6	4	4
92nd (1971-1972)	20	6	14	2	33.3	3	4
93rd (1973-1974)	39	27	12	5	18.5	12	10
94th (1975-1976)	37	32	5	8	25.0	17	15
95th (1977-1978)	19	6	13	0	0.0	2	0
96th (1979-1980)	12	7	5	2	28.6	2	2
97th (1981-1982)	15	9	6	2	22.2	4	3
98th (1983-1984)	24	9	15	2	22.2	2	2
99th (1985-1986)	20	13	7	2	15.4	3	3
100th (1987-1988)	19	8	11	3	37.5	5	4
101st (1989-1990)	21	16	5	0	0.0	9	5
102nd (1991-1992) ^a	25	15	10	1	6.7	3	3
103rd (1993-1994)	0	0	0	0	—	0	0
104th (1995-1996)	17	17	0	1	5.9	6	1
105th (1997-1998)	8	8	0	0	0.0	1	1
106th (1999-2000)	12	11	1	0	0.0	3	1
107th (2000-2002)	0	0	0	0	—	0	0
108th (2003-2004)	0	0	0	0	—	0	0
109th (2005-2006)	1	1	0	0	0.0	1	0
110th (2007-2008) ^d	11	11	0	4	36.4	9	4
111th (2009-2010)	2	2	0	0	0.0	2	0
112th (2011-2012)	0	0	0	0	0.0	0	0
113th (2013-2014)	0	0	0	0	0.0	0	0
114th (2015-2016)	12	12	0	1	8.0	3	2

Note: This table does not include line-item vetoes. After President Clinton excised several Pentagon programs from the 1998 budget, both houses of Congress, under the line-item veto law, passed legislation restoring some of the programs (H.R. 2631). President Clinton subsequently vetoed that bill, and both houses of Congress passed legislation overriding his veto. Subsequently, the Supreme Court declared the line-item veto unconstitutional.

a. On some occasions the President has issued a protective return veto, where the bill was returned, unsigned, while Congress was in an interim adjournment. The President has considered the bills to have been pocket vetoed while Congress considered them to have been regular vetoed. Vital Statistics counts these as regular vetoes.

Source: "Resume of Congressional Activity," Congressional Record, 80th Congress - 113th Congress. <http://www.senate.gov/reference/Legislation/Vetoes/vetoCounts.htm>

Table 6-7

Attempted and Successful Cloture Votes, 66th - 115th Congress, 1919-2018

<i>Congress</i>	<i>1st session</i>		<i>2nd session</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>attempted</i>	<i>successful</i>	<i>attempted</i>	<i>successful</i>	<i>attempted</i>	<i>successful</i>
66th (1919-1920)	1	1	0	0	1	1
67th (1921-1922)	1	0	1	0	2	0
68th (1923-1924)	0	0	0	0	0	0
69th (1925-1926)	0	0	2	1	2	1
70th (1927-1928)	5	2	0	0	5	2
71st (1929-1930)	0	0	0	0	0	0
72nd (1931-1932)	0	0	0	0	0	0
73rd (1933-1934)	1	0	0	0	1	0
74th (1935-1936)	0	0	0	0	0	0
75th (1937-1938)	0	0	2	0	2	0
76th (1939-1940)	0	0	0	0	0	0
77th (1941-1942)	0	0	1	1	1	1
78th (1943-1944)	0	0	1	1	1	1
79th (1945-1946)	0	0	4	0	4	0
80th (1947-1948)	0	0	0	0	0	0
81st (1949-1950)	0	0	2	0	2	0
82nd (1951-1952)	0	0	0	0	0	0
83rd (1953-1954)	0	0	1	0	1	0
84th (1955-1956)	0	0	0	0	0	0
85th (1957-1958)	0	0	0	0	0	0
86th (1959-1960)	0	0	1	0	1	0
87th (1961-1962)	1	0	3	1	4	1
88th (1963-1964)	1	0	2	1	3	1
89th (1965-1966)	2	1	5	0	7	1
90th (1967-1968)	1	0	5	1	6	1
91st (1969-1971)	2	0	4	0	6	0
92nd (1971-1972)	10	2	10	2	20	4
93rd (1973-1974)	10	2	21	7	31	9
94th (1975-1976)	23	13	4	4	27	17
95th (1977-1978)	5	1	8	2	13	3
96th (1979-1980)	4	1	17	9	21	10
97th (1981-1982)	7	2	20	7	27	9
98th (1983-1984)	7	2	12	9	19	11
99th (1985-1986)	9	1	14	9	23	10
100th (1987-1988)	23	5	20	6	43	11
101st (1989-1990)	9	6	15	5	24	11
102nd (1991-1992)	20	9	27	13	47	22
103rd (1993-1994)	24	4	22	10	46	14
104th (1995-1996)	21	4	29	5	50	9
105th (1997-1998)	24	7	29	11	53	18
106th (1999-2000)	36	11	22	17	58	28
107th (2001-2002)	22	12	39	22	61	34
108th (2003-2004)	23	1	26	11	49	12
109th (2005-2006)	20	13	34	21	54	34
110th (2007-2008)	62	31	50	30	112	61
111th (2009-2010)	39	35	52	28	91	63
112th (2011-2012)	34	19	39	22	73	41
113th (2013-2014)	64	50	154	137	218	187
114th (2015-2016)	64	31	60	30	124	61
115th (2017-2018)	72	71	95	85	167	156

Note: The number of votes required to invoke cloture was changed on March 7, 1975, from two-thirds of those present and voting to three-fifths of the total Senate membership, as Rule XXII of the standing rules of the Senate was amended.

Unanimous Consent and "No Vote" are not counted as attempts.

Two votes on the same bill was counted as two attempts.

a. On November 3, 1993, one vote was taken to break filibusters on five separate presidential nominees. Vital Statistics counts this as five attempted cloture votes.

Source: Sources: "Indicators of congressional workload and activity," Congressional Research Service; US Senate website

(http://www.senate.gov/pagelayout/reference/cloture_motions/clotureCounts.htm)