

# The Three Branches of Government

*Constitutions establish checks and balances, and separation of powers*

## Federal Government

### Legislative

**U.S. Congress** is made up of 2 houses: House of Representatives and the Senate.

- The Senate has 100 members, based on 2 Senators from each state.
- The House of Representatives has 435 members, based on state population.

### Judicial

**U.S. Courts** have 3 levels:

- 94 district courts (trial courts) throughout the country
- 13 circuit courts (Court of Appeals)
- 1 Supreme Court with 9 justices

### Executive

**President of the United States**



## California Government

### Legislative

**The California Legislature** is made up of 2 houses: The state Assembly and the state Senate.

- The state Senate has 40 members.
- The state Assembly has 80 members.

### Judicial

**California Courts** have 3 levels:

- 58 superior courts (trial courts) throughout the state with 1 per county
- 6 Courts of Appeal
- 1 Supreme Court with 7 justices

### Executive

**Governor of California**

# The Three Branches of Government: *Focus on Judicial Branch*

## *Federal* U.S. Supreme Court



## *State* California Supreme Court



### The Judicial Branch

- Resolves disputes arising under the law.
- Interprets and applies the law consistently, impartially, and independently.
- Upholds the Constitution, and protects the rights and liberties guaranteed in that document.

#### U.S. Court of Appeals

- 13 circuit courts
- Reviews the decisions of the federal and state trial and appellate courts

#### U.S. District Courts

- 94 judicial districts across U.S.
- Courts hear civil and criminal cases
- Specialized courts include bankruptcy and international trade courts

#### California Court of Appeal

- 6 appellate districts
- Review the decisions of the superior courts

#### California Superior Courts

- 58 superior/trial courts (1 per county)
- Courts hear civil and criminal cases
- Specialized courts include juvenile and family courts