

➤ **PEOPLE TO KNOW**

Maria Cantwell
William O. Douglas
Tim Eyman
Christine Gregoire
Gary Locke
Patty Murray
Dixie Lee Ray

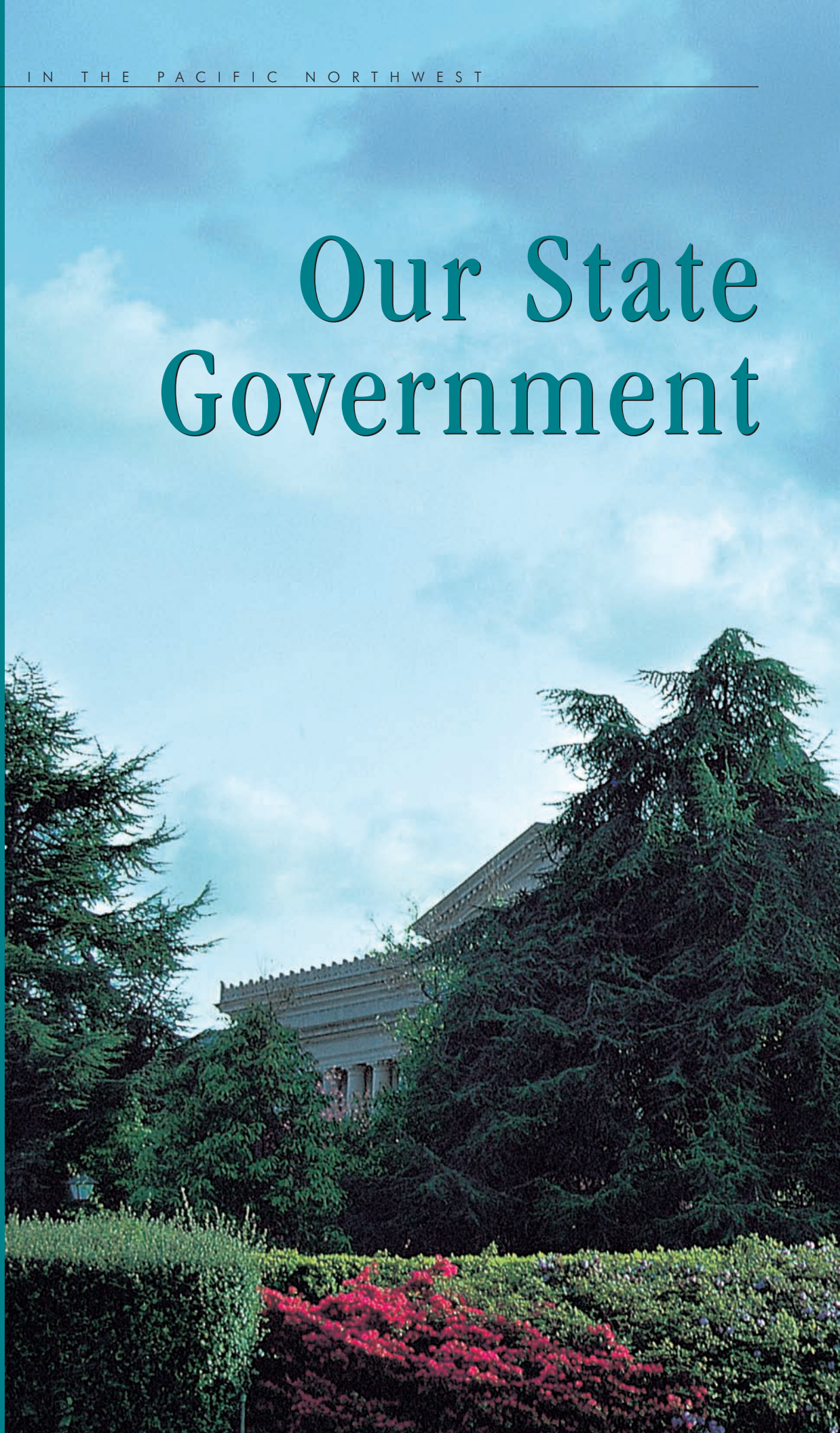
➤ **WORDS TO UNDERSTAND**

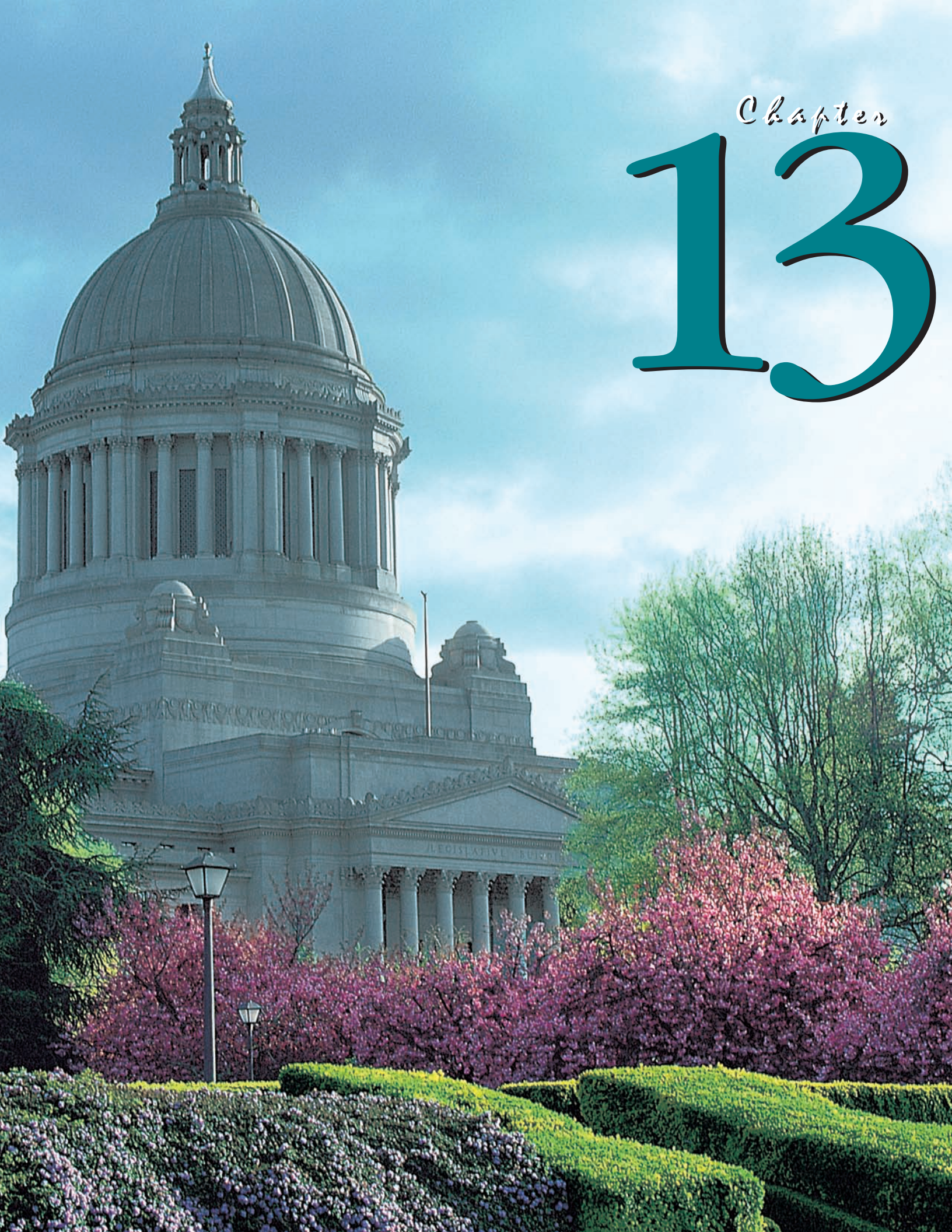
absentee ballot
bill
checks and balances
electors
executive branch
federal government
initiative
judicial branch
legislative branch
legislators
lobbyist
political party
precinct
primary election
municipal
referendum
repeal
representatives
veto

Our State Government

Lawmakers meet in Olympia.

Photo by Jeffrey High





Chapter

13

People Need Rules and Laws

Whenever people live in groups, they need rules or laws. Families have rules about honesty, respect, housework, homework, and when to be home at night. American Indians had tribal rules. As early settlers traveled to the Pacific Northwest, they followed rules aboard ship or rules set by the wagon train master. Rules help things go smoothly—laws protect people and their rights. Rules and laws reflect what is important to people in a community.

In Washington and all other states, there are several levels of government. The **federal government** makes laws that apply to everyone in the country. Other laws are made at the state level. Rules, called ordinances, are made locally at the county and city levels. We must live by the laws of all the levels of government.

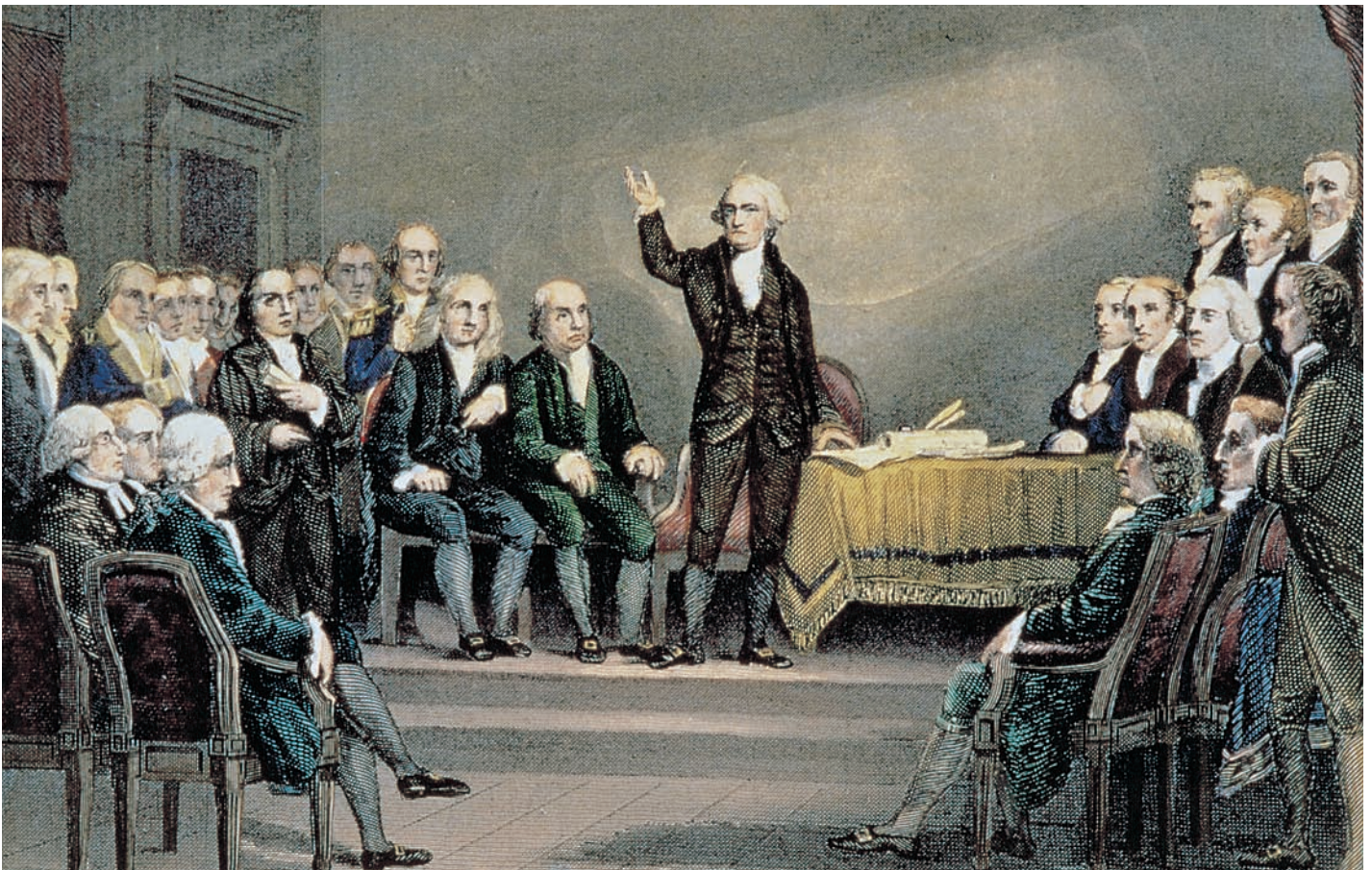
The story goes that George Washington, shown in the center of this painting, did not want to leave his home and family to make the trip to Philadelphia to write the Constitution. James Madison implored him to give of his wisdom, and Washington arrived to lead the convention.

Painting colored by North Wind

Governing the United States

Back in 1787, several years before Robert Gray explored the coast of Washington by ship, fifty-five men met in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and began the difficult task of writing a constitution for the United States of America. James Madison, from Virginia, came to be known as the Father of the Constitution because he had studied ancient governments of the world and designed most of the plan for the new government. Other famous men at the convention were George Washington and Benjamin Franklin.

The Constitution was written to limit the powers of government so the people would never have to live under the kinds of tyranny they had seen in European countries. The Constitution is still, after over 200 years, the foundation of our government.



We the People

We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

—Preamble to the Constitution, 1787

When the Constitution was written, most American men were farmers or merchants. Most women worked at home and on the family farms. Few men and women had much education. Today, over 200 years later, most Americans live in urban areas, work at thousands of kinds of jobs that nearly always include computers, and are educated in public and private schools. In spite of the many changes in the country, the Constitution remains a source of pride and the basis of a government for a free people.

Changing the Constitution

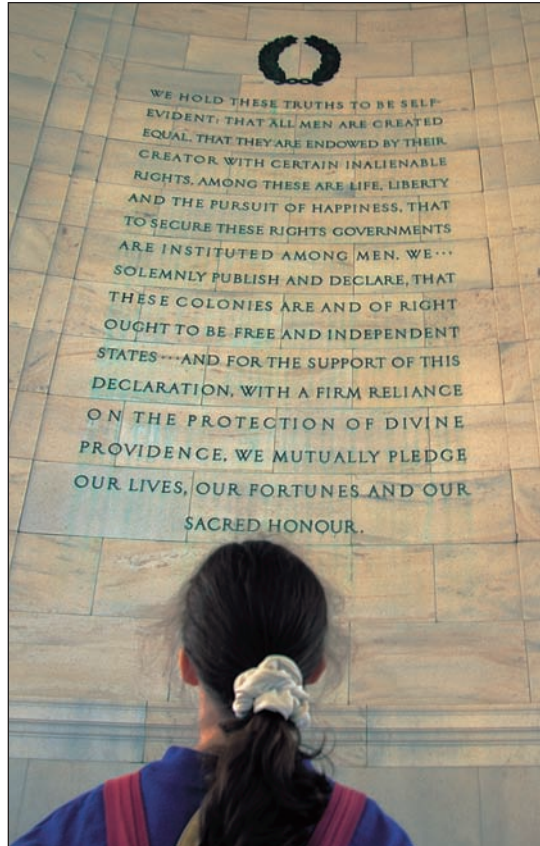
About three years after the Constitution was written, Congress added ten important amendments called the Bill of Rights. The men remembered the words of the Declaration of Independence:

We hold these truths to be self-evident—That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The people wanted a guarantee that their new government could never take away their rights.

Amendments 1-10. Bill of Rights (1791)

These amendments include freedom of religion, speech, and the press. Other freedoms are the right to assemble, to bear arms, the right to a speedy public trial, and a trial by jury. These amendments are very



Government by the People

Democracy: rule by the majority

Republic: citizens elect representatives to make laws

Federal: government shared by national, state, and local governments

Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence that stated the belief that certain rights were given to men by their Creator, not by government. James Madison later wrote the Bill of Rights.

Photo by Scott Barrow

important to our way of life in America.

The Tenth Amendment is very important. It states that the government has only the specific powers given to it by the Constitution. All other powers remain with the states or the people.

Over the years, people have tried to pass laws that would take away the freedoms granted by the Bill of Rights. The judges of state courts and the Supreme Court of the United States interpret laws as constitutional or unconstitutional. If a law is declared unconstitutional, it is **repealed**.

Forms of World Government

Democracy: rule by the majority

Monarchy: rule by a single person

Oligarchy: rule by a few (the elite)

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

In the United States we are ruled by laws, not the whims or dictates of leaders. Both our state and federal constitutions give directions on how laws are made. Compare this practice to some other countries you hear about in the news. What are some differences in how our country is governed and how some other countries are ruled? Which way do you think is best for Americans?

ACTIVITY

The Role of Government

The authors of the U.S. Constitution gave the national government power to provide only a few limited services that the Constitution calls powers. Here are some of them:

Section:

8.1. Taxation. The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes . . .

8.2. Credit. To borrow money on the credit of the United States.

8.3. Commerce. To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.

8.5. Money. To coin money, regulate the value thereof . . . and fix the standard of weights and measures.

8.7. Post Office and Roads. To establish post offices and post roads [toll roads].

8.11. War. To declare war . . .

8.12 Armed Forces. To raise and support armies.

8.13. Navy. To provide and maintain a navy.

Do you agree or disagree with the government providing these services? Do you agree or disagree with paying taxes to support the services? Would you prefer that private companies provide the services and charge for them? Would you like to see more or less services by the government? Why or why not?

Branches of Government

The U.S. Constitution outlines a plan for three divisions, or branches, of government. Each branch has its own powers. Each branch of government also limits the power of the other two. The power of government is divided so that no single branch can become too powerful.

This balance of power is a system of **checks and balances**.

The three branches of the national government are:

- **Legislative** (also called Congress, which is made up of two houses—the Senate and the House of Representatives)
- **Executive** (a president, vice president, cabinet, and many agencies)
- **Judicial** (the Supreme Court, Appeals Court, and lower courts)

The Legislative Branch

Article 1 of the Constitution describes the legislative branch of government:

All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

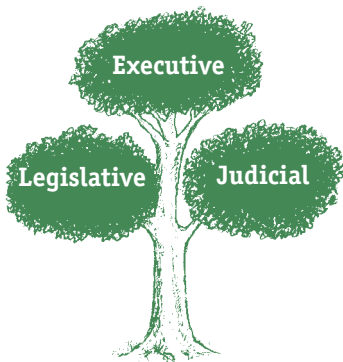
It is impossible for all citizens to be experts on the law, and it is impossible for all citizens to attend Congress and vote for laws in person, so the Constitution set up a plan where **representatives** are elected by the people. Then the representatives vote on behalf of the group who elected them. This is why our country is said to have “representative democracy” or a “republic.”

Voters in each of the fifty states elect two representatives to be part of the U.S. Senate in Washington, D.C. This means that many densely populated states have the same vote as those with fewer people. In the Senate, Washington State gets the same amount of votes as California, Texas, and New York—states that have the largest populations in the country.

The number of people elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, however, is based on population. That means that California, Texas, and New York have many representatives, while the least-populated states have only one. In 2006, Washington had nine representatives. If our population changes a lot, that number may change.

The Executive Branch

The president of the United States heads the Executive Branch. The president is supported by a vice president, a cabinet,



and hundreds of appointed offices and agencies.

How is the president elected? People in all the states vote for the president, but the president is not elected by a direct vote of the people. Instead, the Constitution set up an electoral system to vote for the president.

“Each state shall appoint . . . a number of electors, equal to the number of Senators and Representatives . . .”

—Article 2, Section 1, U.S. Constitution

Washington’s eleven electoral votes all go to one candidate. This means that if sixty out of each hundred Washington citizens voted for Mr. Blue, and forty out of each hundred voted for Mrs. Red, all of Washington’s electoral college votes would go to Mr. Blue, and probably none would go to Mrs. Red.

In fact, electors are not legally bound to vote for anyone. They can choose who to vote for, but they nearly always cast their vote for the person who got the majority of citizen votes.

The Judicial Branch

The U.S. Supreme Court is the highest court in the land. The nine judges determine if laws made by Congress are constitutional. Did the Constitution really mean that people of all races, including women, could attend any public school and vote in national elections? These are some of the hard decisions the court has had to make in the past.

The Supreme Court also hears appeals from people who don’t think lower state courts handled their cases properly.



WILLIAM O. DOUGLAS

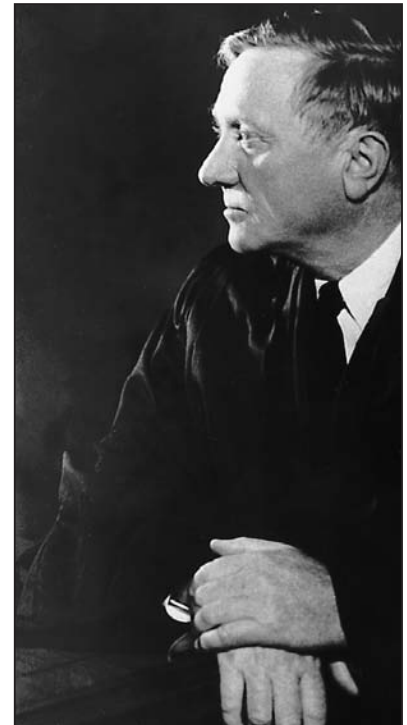
William O. Douglas became the only justice of the U.S. Supreme Court from the Pacific Northwest. His father was a minister who brought his wife and young children to eastern Washington, where he died shortly after arriving. Young William grew up in Yakima. He was determined to fight his lameness from polio, so

he took long, slow, painful hikes.

Douglas grew up and became a high school teacher in Yakima, but quit to attend law school in New York. He hitchhiked east, hopping freight trains, and arrived in New York with six cents.

After graduating from law school, Douglas held several important positions in government. He worked closely with President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who appointed Douglas to the Supreme Court, where he served longer than any other justice in history.

In addition to Douglas’s reverence for law, he loved the land of the Pacific Northwest. Today, there is a large wilderness area named after him.



Douglas served as U.S. Supreme Court justice from 1939 to 1975—the longest time in history.

Political Parties

Our Constitution does not provide for political parties, but they have become important to our government. A **political party** is a group of people who have a lot of the same ideas about government. Most people in Washington and the rest of the United States belong to either the Democratic Party or the Republican Party. There are also third parties, such as the Socialist Party, Libertarian Party, Green Party, and Reform Party. Some citizens run for office or vote as

Independents. They do not belong to any party.

Political parties work to get members of their party elected to office.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- **Can a political party, whose members share many of the same ideas, be more effective than individuals working alone?**
- **Do you think it is a good idea to vote for a party, or to learn about the candidates on an individual basis? Why?**

Which Party?

Washington citizens voted mostly for Republicans between 1900 and 1930. Then, from 1940 to 1990, they elected mostly Democrats to Congress, but still voted for Republicans for governors. Voters said they made their decisions on issues, not party membership. Does this trend still hold today?

The following guidelines are some beliefs of the two main parties. Remember that there are always many different beliefs within a party.

Democrats

- Government should be wisely used to improve life for all.
- Public education is a high priority and should be fully funded.
- Civil rights should be protected regardless of color, gender, or sexual orientation.
- Pro Choice (the mother should be able to choose whether or not to have an abortion).
- The environment is fragile and should be protected.
- Unions have the right to strike.
- The state has a responsibility to assist the poor, children, and the elderly.
- Health care should be available to everyone regardless of income.

Republicans

- Government has grown too large and should be downsized.
- Public education is a priority, but private and home schools also have a role.
- Government should not legislate personal responsibility.
- Pro Life (no abortions except in certain cases regarding health of the mother).
- Environmental decisions should be balanced against economic impact.
- Strong businesses provide good jobs, so businesses should be protected.
- The wealthy should not be penalized for making good choices and making money.
- Health care should be available, but it is not a right and is best handled by the private sector.



Washington's State Constitution

The Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution gives to the states all other powers not granted in the U.S. Constitution. This gives states broad powers.

Our state constitution was adopted in 1889. The 73 delegates who wrote the document were all white males. They were men of property and high social standing—mostly lawyers, bankers, businessmen, and well-to-do farmers.

Their views show clearly that the constitution is a product of its time. The delegates distrusted legislative power that might be influenced by “radical” requests of farmers or laborers, so they gave the governor broad veto powers. The governor could veto a whole bill or entire sections of any bill.

The constitution is also filled with many references to business corporations. The corporation was then emerging as the major business organization. The framers of the constitution wanted to both encourage and regulate corporations.

Because of this attention to specific matters, Washington's constitution is lengthy and detailed. It fills 70 pages of text, contains 31 separate articles, and was amended 82 times in its first 100 years. By comparison, the U.S. Constitution is only 9 pages long, contains 7 articles, and has been amended 27 times in over 200 years.

Women in State Government

Our state constitution reads: “No person, except a citizen of the United States and a qualified elector [voter] of this state, shall be eligible to hold any state office.”

At the time the constitution was written, women did not have the vote, so they could not hold any state office. A woman could never be a senator, judge, or governor. But

during the reform spirit of the Progressive Movement (the late 1800s–1920) women became politically active, especially in promoting their right to vote. In 1910, Washington's male legislature finally approved women's suffrage.

Over the following years the state became a leader in promoting equality for women. In 1972 voters approved a state Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). Washington's Sixty-first Amendment reads: “Equality under the law shall not be denied or abridged on account of sex.” The effort to have a national ERA failed, however, which meant Washington women had more protection under state law than federal law.



Dixie Lee Ray, a marine biologist, was Washington's first female governor and one of the first female governors in the nation. She was elected in 1976.

Male voters approved the state constitution in 1889 by a 4-1 margin. In the same election they defeated women's suffrage by more than 2-1. What year did women win suffrage in state elections? In national elections?

LINKING THE PAST TO THE PRESENT

In 2007, Washington's two U.S. senators are both women (Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell). Only two other states—California and Maine—share this distinction. Women serve in both houses of the state legislature, and in 2004 former State Attorney General, Christine Gregoire, was elected governor.

Government offices are located in the capital cities of both the state and the nation.



The State Legislature

Like the national Constitution, our state constitution includes the three branches of government. The state legislature is patterned after the national Congress, but it makes laws only for the state of Washington. The state legislature is made up of two parts: the Senate and the House of Representatives.

The state is divided into forty-nine districts of about equal population. Each district sends one senator and two representatives to the state legislature in Olympia. Because the legislature is not in session all year, many of the members have other jobs. **Legislators** are paid a salary for their work as representatives of the people.

- The legislature meets in January each year and stays for sixty days or longer.
- The governor can call special sessions.

The legislature oversees:

- **Taxes:** determines what to tax and how much the tax will be.
- **Spending:** decides what the state will spend tax money on.
- **Regulations and policies:** passes laws to protect and govern citizens; regulates state licenses.
- **State government:** sets rules for branches of government.
- **Local governments:** gives authority to counties and towns.
- **State constitution:** makes sure the rights and responsibilities of the state constitution are observed; amends the constitution.

Committees

The work of the legislature is done in committees. Both political parties appoint members to serve on various committees. All legislators serve on more than one committee.

Committees review proposed laws before they are sent to the rest of the House or Senate for a vote



The state legislature started meeting in the Capitol Building in Olympia in the early 1900s.

Lobbyists

Lobbyists work for large companies, environmental groups, and others. Groups that want certain bills to pass or not pass pay lobbyists; other lobbyists are volunteers. A lobbyist contacts legislators to give advice and information about the bill.

Representatives from business, education, local governments, labor, healthcare, and environmental groups are so numerous during a legislative session that they may outnumber legislators by four to one. "Ulcer Gulch" is the slang term for the area between the House and Senate chambers where lobbyists hang out, do business, and listen for useful gossip. Many legislative bills are actually drafted initially by lobbyists.

How an Idea Becomes a Law

Hundreds of new *bills* are presented during every state legislative session. The idea for a bill can come from nearly anywhere—citizens, businesses, clubs, organizations, cities, legislative committees, or the governor. Only legislators can introduce a bill to the legislature, however. Once a bill is written up properly, it is introduced to either the House or Senate and assigned to one of the committees.

The committee reviews a proposed bill. If it is approved, the bill moves on to a hearing, where any interested person may testify for or against it. When the hearing is finished, amendments may be added to the bill. Or, a committee can let a bill “die” and not take any more action on it.

If the committee sends a bill on, it goes to the Rules Committee and gets on the calendar to be discussed on a certain day. Senators or representatives debate the bill and then vote. If they pass it,

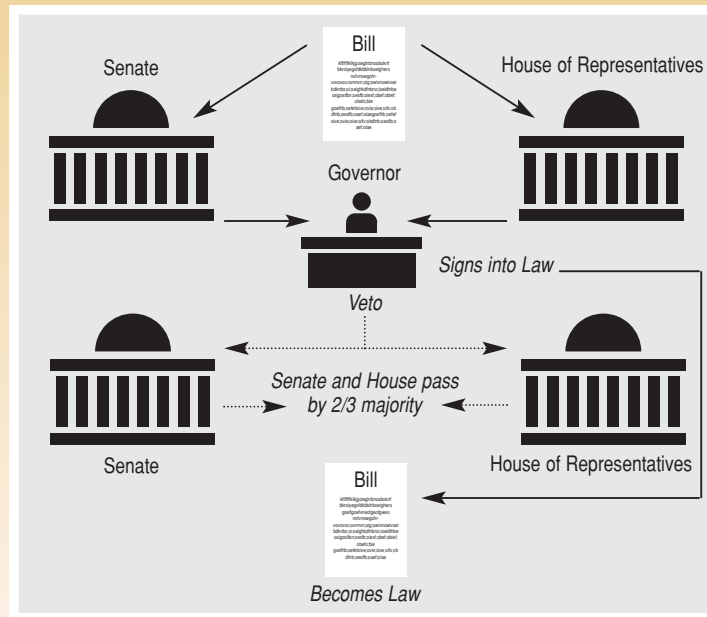
the bill is reviewed once more by the Rules Committee, then given a final vote. Once it has passed, it is passed on to the other house.

After both houses have passed the same bill, it goes to the governor. Citizens can contact the governor to voice their opinion at this point. If the governor signs it, it becomes law. If the governor does nothing, it becomes law in five to ten days. If the governor *veto*s it, it dies.

However, if the legislature wants to pass the law in spite of the governor’s veto, a two-thirds vote by both houses can override the

veto and the bill becomes a law. This is one of the checks and balances of power—neither the executive nor the legislative branch can make a law alone.

The process of turning an idea into a law is long, but it happens a lot. In the 2000 legislative session, over 1,500 bills were introduced. From those bills, 348 bills were passed in Washington State.



What Can Citizens Do?

A lot! Citizens can:

- Give ideas for laws to their legislators. Many ideas for bills start this way.
- Attend a public hearing on the day the bill is debated, or “heard.” It is a good idea to bring as many people as possible to the meeting. They may get to talk to legislators about their experiences.
- Call the governor’s office to give an opinion on signing or vetoing a bill.

Every Vote Counts

Never was that more true than in Washington’s 2004 race for governor. Democrat Christine Gregoire and Republican Dino Rossi found themselves in the closest such election in American history. Rossi was ahead in the first count by 261 votes. But a machine recount showed him leading by only 42 votes out of nearly 2.9 million ballots cast. Gregoire’s supporters raised the \$700,000 necessary to pay, as required by law, for a third and final hand recount. That tally gave the victory to Gregoire by 129 votes. But citing dozens of apparent illegal ballots, the Rossi forces launched an unprecedented legal campaign for a revote. They were unsuccessful. Gregoire became the second woman elected governor of the state.

A Direct Democracy

As time went on, it became necessary to amend our state's constitution many times. The amendment process involves a 2/3 vote by each house of the legislature, followed by a majority vote of the people in the next general election.

Some amendments have had great influence on the state's history. Probably the most important of these is the Seventh Amendment, adopted in 1912. This provided for the *initiative* and *referendum*. These measures of "direct democracy" allow voters to approve or reject laws passed by the legislature (referendum) or pass laws themselves (initiative). After securing a required number of signatures, a measure goes on the public ballot at the next general election.

During the 1990s, the initiative was used by anti-tax activists to restrict legislative spending. Increases in the state spending budget could not be higher than the increase in the cost of living.

The most controversial initiative of the decade was passed in 1999. The work of an anti-tax activist, Tim Eyman, the measure drastically rolled back the cost of vehicle licensing. City and county governments

across the state that had received money from the motor vehicle tax were faced with huge budget shortfalls. The city of Cheney shut down city parks, the swimming pool, and recreation programs and fired nine employees because the city could not pay for them.

Executive Branch

The executive branch is responsible for carrying out the laws. Officers can be a member of any political party no matter what party the governor belongs to.

Governor: executes and enforces the laws and manages state government.

The governor:

- hires a staff of hundreds of people.
- presents the legislature with the "State of the State"—a report of how the state is doing and how the governor wants to spend tax money.
- commands the Washington State National Guard.
- can submit bills to the legislature.
- signs bills into law.

Washington's governor has a power many other states do not allow. Our governor may veto an entire bill, or use a "line-item veto" for single sections.

Lieutenant Governor: serves as president of the state Senate; replaces the governor if he or she is unable to finish a term; acts in place of the governor if the governor is out of the state

Secretary of State: runs state elections; registers corporations; maintains archives and records

Treasurer: is in charge of the state's finances

Auditor: prepares financial information

Teenagers in the Legislature?

You might think about applying to serve as a page in the state legislature. Pages help legislators and staff with tasks while the legislature is in session. Student pages work for one week and are paid. Pages must:

- Have a grade point average of C+ or better*
- Get parent/guardian's permission*
- Get school's permission*
- Be sponsored by a Senator*
- Be between 14 and 17 years old*

To request an application or find out more, contact the Secretary of the Senate's office at P.O. Box 40482, Olympia, WA 98504-0482, or check out www.leg.wa.gov/senate/sadm/senpage.htm

Attorney General: acts as the chief attorney for the state; gives legal advice to members of the executive branch

Superintendent of Public Instruction: oversees public schools, state education standards, and funding for education

Commissioner of Public Lands: heads the Department of Natural Resources; manages state-owned lands, forests, and water

Insurance Commissioner: regulates insurance companies; serves as the state fire marshal, setting safety standards and investigating fires

Judicial Branch

The legislators make the laws, but it is up to the judicial branch—the courts—to determine exactly what the laws mean. How many times have you heard on the news that a law was judged unconstitutional? That means that judges decided a law took away the rights that are guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution and its Bill of Rights or in the Washington State Constitution.

The highest court in Washington is the state Supreme Court. It is made up of nine judges, each elected by state voters. Candidates run for election without being sponsored by any political party.

Below the Supreme Court are other courts. They include the court of appeals, superior court, justice-of-the-peace courts, and *municipal* (city) courts.

How are judges paid? Judges are not paid from fees and fines, as some people think. Their salaries come from taxes each citizen pays.



GARY LOCKE

Gary Locke took office as Washington's governor in 1997, making him the first Chinese-American governor in U.S. history.

Until he was six years old, Gary lived in a public housing project in Seattle. He played with other children whose fathers had served in WWII. The family of five children was poor, but they all worked hard and studied to get an education. As he grew up, Gary worked in his father's grocery store, became an Eagle Scout, and graduated from high school. Then he graduated from Yale and got a law degree from Boston University.

Locke worked as a deputy prosecutor in King County and then was elected to the state House of Representatives.

As governor, Locke pushed to hire more school teachers to reduce class size, improved struggling schools, and created the Washington Reading Corps to help students learn to read. He also signed into law a welfare reform bill that reduced the number of families on welfare. He helped create more jobs by giving tax relief to businesses.

Governor Locke and his wife, Mona, are the parents of a son and a daughter.



Local Government

Besides federal and state government, we also have governments that are closer to home. We live under the laws of all levels of government. Each level includes the three branches of government.

Counties

Washington is divided into thirty-nine counties. One town in each county is the county seat where the county government is located. Each county is run by three county commissioners. They are elected to four-year terms. Washington's two largest counties—King and Pierce—are ruled by a council.

City Governments

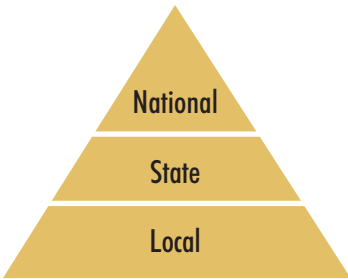
Washington has about 270 municipal governments. Each is governed by one of the following:

- Mayor and city council
- City manager and city council
- Commissioners

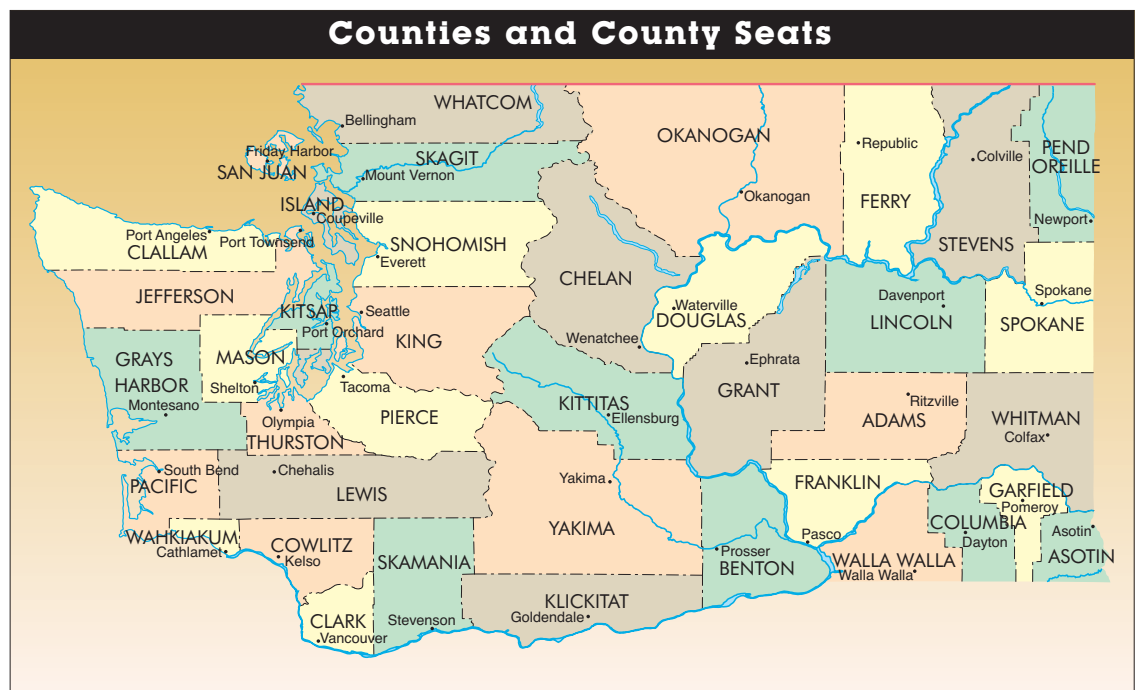
The city council acts as a legislative branch and the mayor acts as the chief executive.

Both counties and cities make rules called ordinances. They also collect tax money and spend it on services.

City governments usually provide services only to people living in the city. They may provide police and fire protection, water, sewage, streets, libraries, and hospital services.



LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT				
Branch	National	State	Local: County	Local: City
Legislative	Congress	State Legislature	Commission	City Council
Executive	President	Governor	Commissioners	Mayor or City Manager
Judicial	Federal Courts	State Courts	County Courts	Traffic Court, Others





Firefighters are trained and paid with tax dollars. In 2001, wildfires burned thousands of acres of beautiful forests.



Roads and freeways are paid for with local, state, and federal tax dollars.

Washington's Tax Base

The government must have an income, called “revenue,” to pay for the services it provides. It gets the revenue from charging taxes. Tax revenue pays thousands of government workers, including your schoolteachers. It pays to build and run buildings, including your school building. It pays to make highways, and it pays police workers to keep the city safe.

How does the government get the tax revenue it needs? One of the most important parts of our state constitution reads: “All taxes shall be uniform upon the same class of property. . . .”

Income Tax?

During the Great Depression the state legislature passed a law authorizing both a corporate and an individual income tax. The taxes were based on a graduating scale, which means people with lower incomes pay less tax, and people and businesses that make more income pay more taxes.

Then the words “uniform” and “property” in the constitution led to an interpretation by the State Supreme Court that greatly affected the amount of taxes workers paid. The court ruled that income was “property,” and because a graduated income tax was not “uniform,” an income tax was

unconstitutional. This means that residents in our state do not pay a state income tax.

So, how does our state get the money it needs? In 1935, when the depression was still a part of American life, Washington lawmakers created a tax system we still use today. Taxes are levied on property (homes and land), retail sales (items bought in stores), public utilities (electricity, gas, water, and sewer), tobacco, and alcohol.

Other than the state lottery, adopted in 1983, there has been no major change in Washington’s tax system since 1935.

Even though Washington residents don't pay a state income tax, they must still pay a federal income tax.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Workers with lower incomes pay a lower dollar amount in taxes because they buy fewer taxed goods, but they pay a much higher percentage of their income in taxes than do wealthier citizens. This is because a person on a lower income may need nearly 100 percent of his income just for necessary items. A wealthy person, however, might have a lot of money left over after her basic needs are met, so much of her income is not taxed (at least until she spends it on taxable items).

Washington residents also have no opportunity to deduct any state income tax from their federal tax bill, like most other people in the United States do.

Do you agree with our state tax laws, or do you think we should have a state income tax like the residents of 42 other states?

Government Services

Today, national, state, and local governments do more than make laws and enforce them. They do more than tax people. Governments have established many agencies that regulate many activities of the citizens and provide services.

State and local governments collect taxes to pay for public education, roads, police and fire protection, libraries, public health services, job services, welfare support, and many other services.

Washington State helps the unemployed, disadvantaged children, the elderly, disabled people, and the mentally ill get cash for food, clothing, and shelter.

Education

Public schools are also a government service. Tax dollars are used to pay for school buildings, teacher's salaries, and textbooks. If you attend a private school,

however, your parents pay a fee for your education.

Since state and local tax money is used to pay for public education, the state legislature can require school districts to do certain things. In 2000, Washington's legislature gave new guidelines that stated that students must attend 180 days of classes each school year. They must meet standards in core subjects—reading, writing, science, social studies, communication, mathematics, health and fitness.

Washington students can study a wide variety of subjects after high school graduation. The state has five universities, one state college, and twenty-seven two-year colleges. Other schools teach subjects such as auto mechanics, welding, carpentry, secretarial work, and other subjects designed to help people make a living. There are colleges for future dentists, doctors, and nurses.

The Power of the Vote

Voting is a very important privilege of the American people. Our state and national constitutions guarantee that all adult citizens can help create and operate their government. How do we do that? By voting for representatives and leaders.

Public servants usually want to represent the ideas of the people who elected them. If they don't, they may be replaced at the next election.

Registering

At least a month before you can vote for the first time, or after you move, you must register to vote. This is so people can't vote over and over again in different places in the same election.

Ask others in your family or your neighborhood where and when to register, or find a form in your phone book in the government section. In many places, you can

Before you are old enough to vote, you can post signs or pass out flyers. You can remind adults to vote.



Dave Allen celebrates after graduating from Western Washington University, 2001.

register where you apply for a driver's license. You will need proof that you are at least eighteen years old, and you will have to give your address. When you register, you will be told what **precinct** (voting region) you live in and where to vote.

Voting

When you vote, your name will be checked on a list of registered voters. Then you will receive a ballot. You can ask for help if you don't understand how to vote, cannot read the ballot for any reason, or have a disability that prevents you from voting in the voting booth.

If you cannot go to the polling place to vote, you can request an **absentee ballot**, and vote by mail before the election is held.

It is important for citizens to vote when elections are held. It is even more important that they know as much as possible about the political parties, the candidates, and any amendments or initiatives they will be voting on. There is always a lot of information in newspapers around voting time.

A New Primary Election

Our state constitution outlines procedures for elections. **Primary elections** give parties the opportunity to choose the candidates they want to run in the general election. For example, each party might start out with four candidates for governor. For some offices, only one candidate will want the job and will run unopposed. No matter how many candidates want the job, only one candidate from each party can run in the general election. The others must be eliminated in a primary election.

Most states have "closed" primaries that involve only Democrats or only Republicans on a ballot. Since the 1930s, however, Washington has had an extreme version of an "open" primary, where all the candidates from every party appear on a single ballot.

American Responsibilities

Along with rights and privileges come responsibilities.

- You have the privilege of voting at age eighteen, so you should study the issues before you vote.
- You have the right to freedom of religion, so you have the responsibility to respect the right of others to belong to a different religion, or no religion at all.
- You have the right to free speech, but you have the responsibility to speak respectfully and kindly to others, and to listen to their point of view without ridicule.
- You have the right to a jury in court, so when you are old enough, you will have the responsibility to serve on a jury.

What other privileges and responsibilities do you have?



Voting is a privilege we take seriously.

Voters picked a favorite for each office, regardless of party. This was very popular because so many Washington voters considered themselves "Independents."

Critics, however, said the open primary allowed for the party "raid." Supporters of a candidate running unopposed in a primary election (assured of a sure victory), can "cross over" and nominate the weakest candidate in the other party, causing stronger candidates to lose the primary. For that reason, the open primary was declared unconstitutional in 2004. Washington now has a primary election law that creates separate party primaries and requires voters to vote on only one party's ballot.

CHAPTER 13 REVIEW

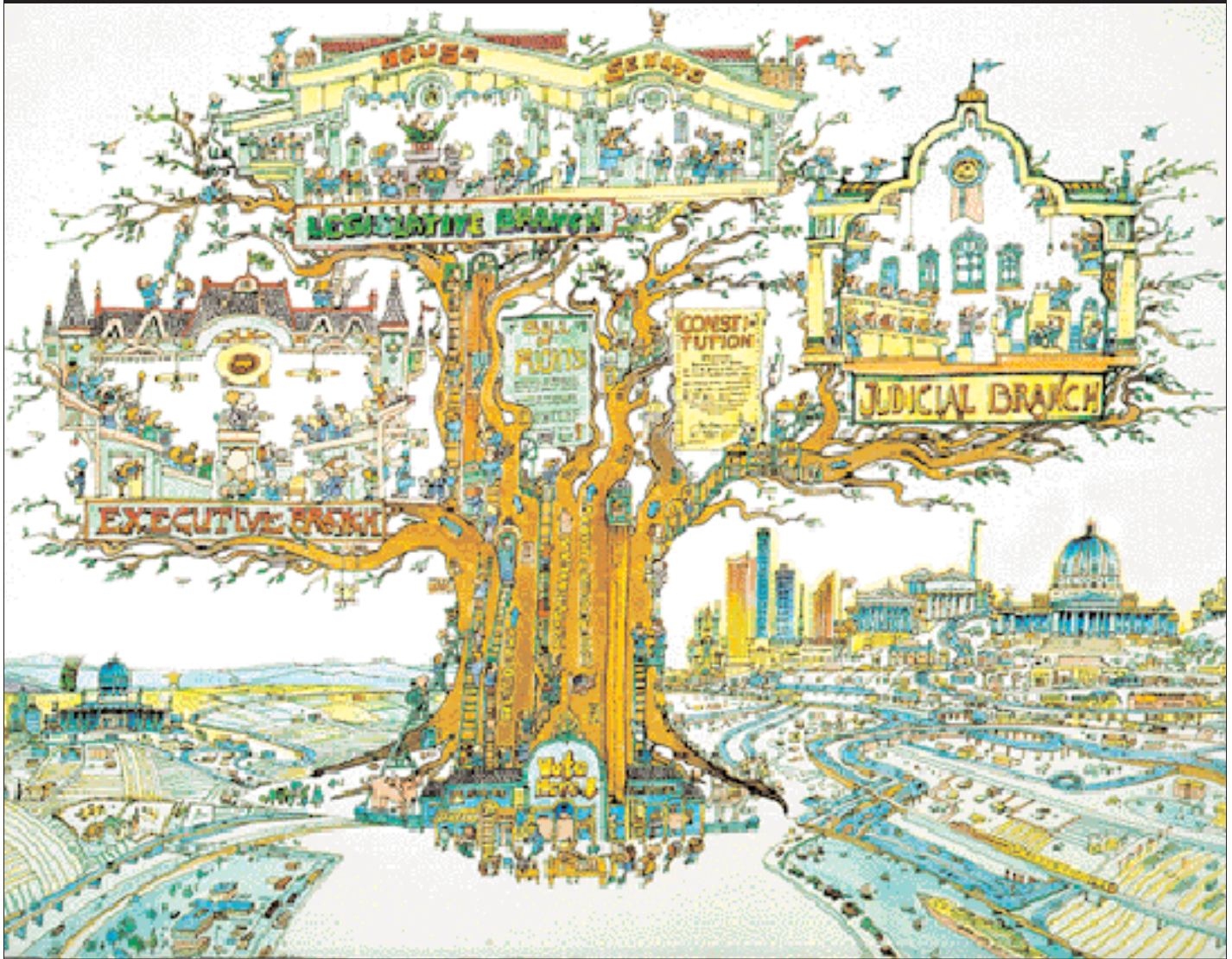
1. What are the three levels of government in the United States today?
2. Who is called the Father of the Constitution?
3. “We, the people of the United States . . .” is the beginning of what important government document?
4. Define: republic, federal.
5. Define: democracy, monarchy, oligarchy.
6. Why was the Bill of Rights added to the U.S. Constitution?
7. List five powers the U.S. Constitution gave to the National government.
8. Name the three branches of government and give an example of each branch.
9. In the United States, the voters elect _____ to vote for laws.
10. How many senators does each state send to the U.S. Congress?
11. The president of the United States heads which branch of government?
12. What is the highest court in the nation?
13. Which is longer, the U.S. Constitution or the Washington State Constitution?
14. Which month does the state legislature start meeting each year?
15. Most of the work of the legislature is done in groups called _____.
16. What can citizens do with the “initiative”?
17. Name two duties of the governor of the state.
18. Courts are part of which branch of government?
19. The governor of Washington State is _____.
20. Name the two largest political parties.
21. Local government includes both _____ and _____ governments that are closer to home than state and federal governments.
22. Where does the government get money to pay for all the services it provides?

GEOGRAPHY TIE-IN

Look at a map of the United States and locate Washington, D.C. (between Maryland and Virginia). If you were elected as a senator or a representative from Washington State to go to Washington, D.C. to help make laws for the nation, how far would you have to travel?

If you traveled by airplane, what states, large mountain ranges, and large rivers might you fly over? What direction would you travel? What ocean would you leave behind in the West? What ocean would you be close to in the East? What kinds of landforms would you see across the country? What natural features? What features have been changed by people?

The Branches of Government



ACTIVITY

It's Your Government!

Remember, all **levels of government**—national, state, and local—have three **branches of government**—legislative, executive, and judicial.

This means that laws are made in the legislatures of both Washington State and Washington, D.C. It means that a president is head of the executive branch of the United States, and a governor is head of the executive branch of a state. There are courts at all levels.

Look at the drawing above.

1. Find the two documents that are the basis for our government today.
2. Find the symbols of the political parties.
3. Find the people voting for representatives who will vote in the legislature.
4. Find the two houses in the legislative branch. Remember, both houses must pass all bills. Who must sign them before they become law?
5. Find the people going from one branch to the other to get bills passed.
6. Find the jury and the judge in the judicial branch.