

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE 115TH CONGRESS

Demographic Categories	Congress Overall	House of Representatives	Senate	General Population
Party Association:				
Democrats	240	194 (45.6%)	46 (46%)	32%
Republicans	301	241 (55.4%)	52 (52%)	24%
Independents	2	0	2 (2%)	38%
Median Age:	59	58	62	37
Gender:				
Men	79%	81% (248)	79% (79)	49.2%
Women	19%	19% (83)	21% (21)	50.8%
Religion:				
Christians	90.7% (485)	N/A	N/A	71%
Protestants	55% (299)	N/A	N/A	48%
Catholics	33% (144)	N/A	N/A	21%
Jews	5% (22)	N/A	N/A	2%
Mormon	2.4% (13)	N/A	N/A	1.7%
Buddhist	0.6% (3)	N/A	N/A	1%
Muslims	0.4% (2)	N/A	N/A	1%
Hindu	0.6% (3)	N/A	N/A	0.4%
Ethnicity:				
Caucasians	80%	78%	90%	77.1%
Hispanics	N/A	7.6%	4%	17.6%
African Americans	N/A	10.6%	3%	13.3%
Asian Americans	N/A	2.3%	3%	5.6%
Other	N/A	>1%	0%	2.6%
Openly LGBT	7	6	1	4.6% (surveyed)
Military Service:	18%	19% (81)	13% (13)	7.3%
New Members		55 (29 Reps, 26 Dems)	13	N/A
Occupation:		NOTE: Data below for	112 th Congress	
Lawyers		34% (148)	52% (52)	0.5%
Businesspersons		42% (181)	26% (26)	9.9%
Public Officials		40% (172)	36% (36)	NA
Educators		16% (68)	13% (13))	4.6%

Questions for Discussion - Use the profiles of the House, Senate and the general population in the chart to help you the questions below. Also refer to the articles, *115th Congress will be most racially diverse in history* and *New Congress, same massive gender disparity*. Use the back if needed.

1. Identify at least six characteristics of a typical representative in the 115th Congress based on the data above.
2. Identify and explain several differences between the make-up of Congress and the general public.
3. According to the articles you read for today, identify several ways the 115th Congress is one of the most diverse in history.
4. How important is it to elect someone of the same statistical profile as the majority in the district in order to gain good representation? Provide pros and cons.