How State Representation Is Determined

Senate
Two senators are selected from each state, for a total of 100 senators. Senators represent the entire state from which they are elected.

House
Apportionment
House seats are apportioned among the states according to each state's population, which is subject to change. State populations are determined by a census (taken every 10 years). Every state is guaranteed at least one representative. The number of House members has been fixed at 435 since 1929.

Redistricting and Gerrymandering
After a census, each state sets up congressional districts, and a representative is elected from each district.

Gerrymandering occurs when district lines are manipulated to give one party a political advantage in the next election.

States and Their House of Representatives
Apportionment, 1990