

# Advocacy: Understanding the Process

*(or How do I gain a fair advantage?)*

# What We'll Cover

Why Am I Here?

How Does Congress Work?

Appropriations: Where the Rubber

Meets the Road

How Do I Make a Difference?

# “Why Am I Here?”

- Gain a better understanding of the legislative process
- Learn when to get involved—and how
- Put my role into better perspective

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good people to do nothing.”

-Edmund Burke

“Government is a trust, and the officers of the government are trustees; both are created for the benefit of the people”

-Henry Clay

# Why Lobby the Federal Government?

- To promote the interests of SGIM, patients & general public
- Enable individuals to do together what they can't do as effectively alone
- Because it's where the \$\$ is!!!

## What Are We Asking For?

- Fair & equitable Medicare reimbursement policies
- Adequate funding for health professions training
- Support for health services research

# Where The Action Is

“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.”

Article 1. Section 1.  
U.S. Constitution

# Congressional Powers

“Tax, pay debts, provide defense...and make laws to carry out the provisions of the Constitution.”

Article 1. Section 8.  
U.S. Constitution

# Congressional Powers *(cont)*

“No money shall be drawn from the treasury, but in consequence of appropriations made by law.”

Article 1. Section 9

U.S. Constitution

# How's Congress Organized?

Leadership

Personal Offices

Committees

# Key Committees

*Authorizing Committees: Set overall policy, program framework, and continuing oversight*

- House Energy & Commerce (Dingell/Barton)
- Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pension (HELP) (Kennedy/Enzi)

# Key Committees (cont)

*Entitlement committees: Set overall policy, program framework, and continuing oversight for Medicare & Medicaid*

- House Ways & Means (Rangel/McCrery)
- House Energy & Commerce (Dingell/Barton)
- Senate Finance (Baucus/Grassley)

# Key Committees (cont.)

*Budget committees: Formulate and guide overall fiscal policy*

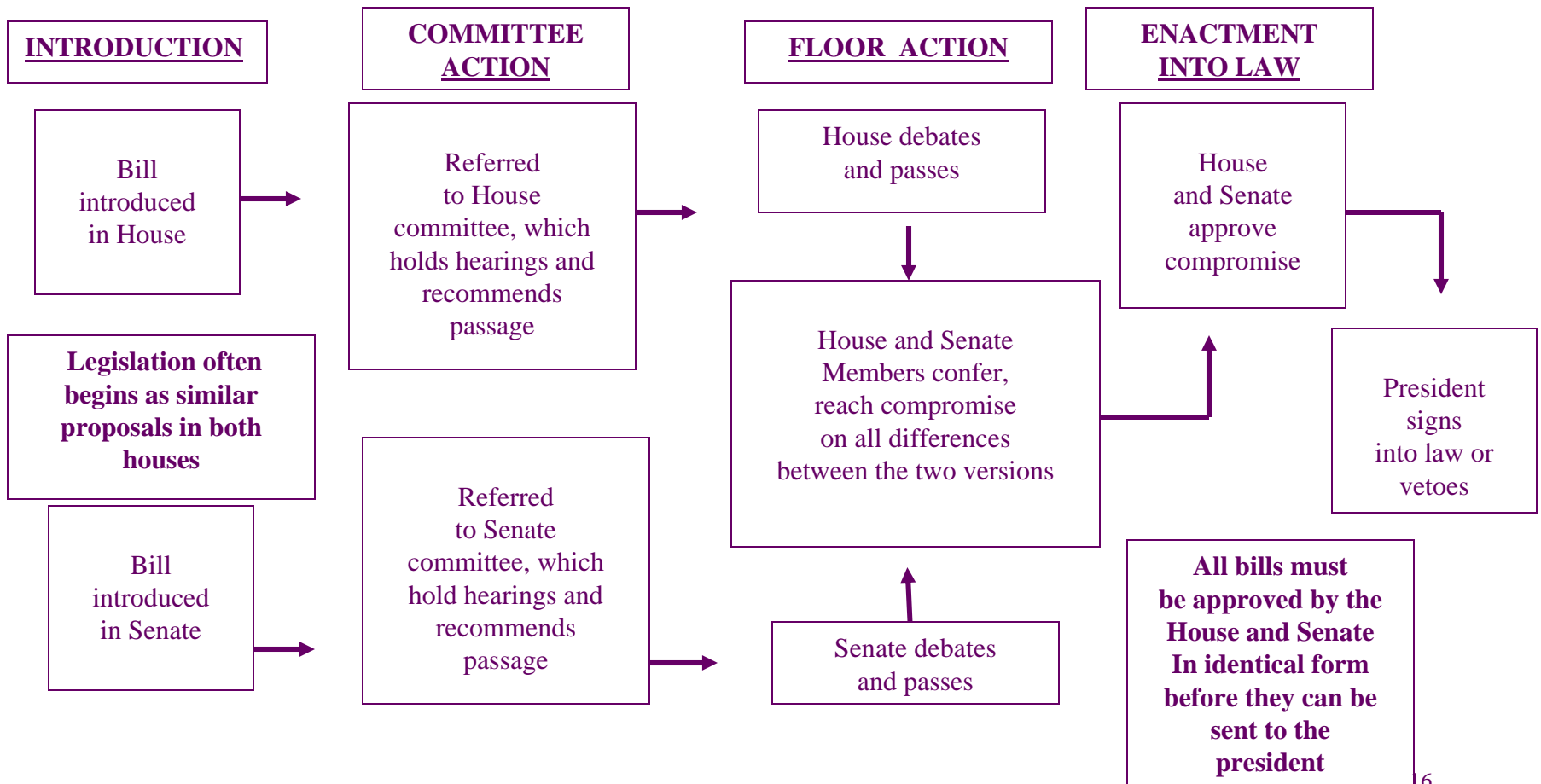
- House Budget Committee  
(Spratt/Ryan)
- Senate Budget Committee  
(Conrad/Gregg)

# Key Committees (cont.)

*Appropriations Committees: Provide funds,  
wield some latitude over policy*

- House Labor, HHS & Education (Obey/Walsh)
- Senate Labor, HHS & Education  
(Harkin/Specter)

# How a Bill Becomes Law



# Advocacy Tools

- SGIM Communications to Congress
- Capitol Hill Day-February 25, 2009
- Ongoing lobbying
- Grassroots contacts throughout the year

# The Appropriations Process

- President submits budget plan (February)
- Budget committees develop spending limits; Appropriations committee hold hearings (March - May)
- Congress adopts overall spending plan (May 15)
- Appropriations committees begin “mark-up” (May)

# The Appropriations Process (cont.)

- House and Senate begin to vote on appropriations bills (June - July)
- House-Senate conference committee resolves differences (September - October)
- House and Senate ratify compromises (October)
- Bills sent to President for approval