**CFE Higher Politics**

**Political Systems: Passage of Legislation Comparison**

**Exemplar paper:** “To what extent is the origin and passage of legislation similar in two political systems you have studied? (20)

**2017:** “The origin and passage of legislation is remarkably similar across different political systems.” **Discuss** - with reference to two political systems you have studied. (20)

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| United Kingdom | Comparison/contrast | United States |
| **Origin (where bills come from)**Different types of billsPrivate members can introduce bills – bills can be introduced by any MP/Lord e.g. MP Julie Morgan submitted bill on age restrictions on sunbedsHOWEVER – most bills come from the govt (mainly from manifesto) and have greater support e.g. recent raise in tuition fees – govt support even though lib dems against it in manifesto.Importantly – bills regarding finance may by-pass house of lords | MAINLY CONTRAST(with some areas of comparison) | **Also different types of bills (public/private)**Can also be introduced by any congressman or senatorParty loyalties in congress mean it is not necessarily the ‘majority’ party that attempts to introduce legislationSome bills originate from the President rather than the ‘government’ e.g. ObamacareCONTRASTINGLY to the UK bills regarding finance do get a say in the Senate – however they must originate in the house of reps (like the UK)e.g. the 2010 FSA bill was blocked on a technicality after it originated in the Senate |
| **Introduction of a bill**1st reading – introduced to ALL MP’sName of bill is read out – either by PM or minister of dept responsible for introducing bill – no debate at this stageTHEN – 2nd readingALL MP’s get a chance to DEBATE the bill and VOTE on it* A 3 line whip is often used at this stage
* Bill can die at this stage
 | CONTRAST | **Bill is placed in the ‘Hopper’ and given a number**GOES STRAIGHT TO COMMITTEE STAGEi.e. sent to a select group of congressmen to review bill – whole house does not get a say at this stageBill can have co-sponsors (other reps that agree with it)BUT no debate at this stageSo a bill can be killed before all reps see it |
| **Committee stage**Both have a committee stage with similar powers and procedures – explain thisi.e. both can make changes | COMPARISON | **Committee stage**Both have a committee stage with similar powers and procedures – explain this*US committees slightly more indepedant**One slight difference – US committee can kill a bill* |
| **Passing a bill**Read a third time and voted on (requires a majority, even if only a few MP’s are present)Vote by walking down a corridor to be countedBill is sent to Lords (lords can make changes – if they do passed back to commons – pin pong)However – 1949 Act of Parliament allows the commons to bypass the lords under certain circumstance | COMPARISONMust pass both houses in same format – UK & USA | Third reading stage alsoHowever in USA requires a 3/5th majority – not just a majorityAlso a minimum for 100 congressmen MUST be present in house of representativesBill is sent to senate (including finance bills) – if they make changes they pass back to house of reps – (ping pong)In US disputes between the 2 houses are settled in Conference committees |
| **Royal Assent**A bill becomes law once it receives royal assentConvention states that the Queen must sign the billAll bills must receive the signature, even bills from the Scottish Parliamente.g. the last time a monarch refused to sign was in the 18th century | CONTRAST | **Presidential Action**A bill is sent to the White House – the president by contrast to the UK monarch has choice. The president does not need to sign the billPresident has 3 options* Sign bill
* VETO – do not sign and say why
* Pocket VETO – allow bill to become law at objection of president

(however, congress can overturn an VETO with 2/3 majority in both houses) |