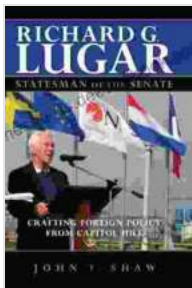


Crafting Foreign Policy From Capitol Hill: Congressional Influence on U.S. Diplomacy

Congress plays a critical role in crafting United States foreign policy. The Constitution grants Congress the power to "declare war," "raise and support armies," and "make all laws which shall be necessary and proper" to carry out those powers. This gives Congress broad authority to influence American diplomacy and military interventions.



Richard G. Lugar, Statesman of the Senate: Crafting Foreign Policy from Capitol Hill by John T. Shaw

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 278 pages
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Screen Reader : Supported



Congressional Powers and Foreign Policy

Congress exercises its foreign policy powers in several ways:

1. Legislation

Congress passes laws that set foreign policy priorities and guide the actions of the executive branch. For example, Congress has passed laws

on trade, military spending, arms control, and human rights. These laws can have a significant impact on U.S. relations with other countries.

2. Oversight

Congress has the power to oversee the executive branch, including the president and the State Department. Congressional committees can hold hearings, investigate foreign policy decisions, and subpoena witnesses. This oversight role gives Congress a way to hold the executive branch accountable for its actions.

3. Advice and Consent

The Senate must approve the president's nominees for key foreign policy positions such as ambassadors and cabinet secretaries. The Senate can also ratify treaties that the president negotiates with other countries.

4. Appropriations

Congress controls the U.S. budget and can use its power to fund or defund foreign policy initiatives. This gives Congress a powerful tool to influence the executive branch's ability to carry out its foreign policy agenda.

Congressional Influence on Foreign Policy

Congress's influence on foreign policy can be seen in a variety of areas:

1. Trade

Congress has passed laws that set tariffs and other trade policies that affect U.S. relations with other countries. Congress has also played a role in negotiating trade agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

2. Military Spending

Congress sets the budget for the U.S. military and decides how that money is spent. This gives Congress a significant say in the size and shape of the U.S. military and its ability to project power around the world.

3. Arms Control

Congress has passed laws to control the sale and proliferation of weapons. Congress has also played a role in negotiating arms control treaties such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the New START Treaty.

4. Human Rights

Congress has passed laws to promote human rights around the world. Congress has also played a role in investigating human rights abuses and in holding those responsible to account.

The Importance of Congressional Engagement

Congressional engagement in foreign policy is essential for a number of reasons:

1. Democratic Accountability

Congress is a democratically elected body that represents the American people. By involving Congress in foreign policy, the American people have a voice in how their country interacts with the rest of the world.

2. Checks and Balances

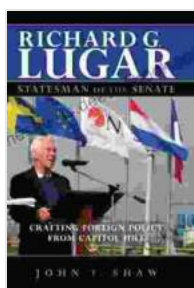
Congress's role in foreign policy helps to ensure that the executive branch does not have unchecked power to make war or conduct foreign affairs.

Congress's oversight and approval powers give it a way to hold the executive branch accountable for its actions.

3. Expertise and Resources

Congress has a wealth of expertise and resources that it can bring to bear on foreign policy issues. Congressional committees and staff members have extensive knowledge of specific policy areas and can provide valuable insights to the executive branch.

Congress plays a vital role in crafting U.S. foreign policy. Congress's powers of legislation, oversight, advice and consent, and appropriations give it a significant say in how the United States interacts with the rest of the world. Congressional engagement in foreign policy is essential for democratic accountability, checks and balances, and ensuring that the United States has a foreign policy that reflects the will of the American people.

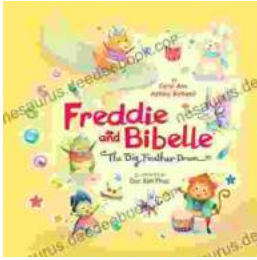


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