

**PASSAGE II**

This passage explains how legislatures have changed and evolved.

Legislatures are increasingly becoming highly professionalized bodies. There have been profound changes in the organization of legislative life, shifts in the location of power, and alterations to the instruments by which power is exercised.

5 James S. Young's account of Washington DC from 1800 through 1828 describes a community of sojourners, people temporarily in a place with little or no expectation of remaining long. Congressmen lived in boarding houses, and the boundaries between the makeshift social life of residents and their political duties were indistinct. Young's Washington was a city of cliques formed around regional and sectional affinities. For the modern legislator, social life has receded to the periphery. Legislators live in apartments and have less to do with one another in groups outside of the formal interactions of the legislative body. Organized political
10 units—conferences, caucuses, committees—have replaced the more personal clique arrangements of an earlier period. Additionally, membership is more likely to be a career in itself rather than a temporary status or a capstone to another career. Indeed, members describe themselves in terms of their status. When asked to list their primary occupation, most describe themselves not as lawyers or business executives but as “legislators.”

15 A second set of changes involves the internalization of control of the legislative body. In earlier periods, it was the Chief Executive who set the agenda for the body as whole. For example, the Chief Executive proposed the budget, and the legislature largely approved it. Or the Chief Executive exercised control through a veto power that was regarded as nearly absolute. Now, legislators are more likely to propose an agenda and to ignore that of the Chief Executive and to make it clear that a veto can be overridden when the issue is of sufficient
20 importance to the membership. External control also used to reside in the hands of local party leaders who controlled nominations. Now, control over nominations is more centralized and under the direction of legislative leaders.

Finally, there is the change in what counts as an instrument of power. Career legislators plan to be re-elected, so influencing a member's re-election chances becomes an important instrument of leadership. Leaders
25 within the body itself now control the means to a successful campaign and distribute money and other assistance in exchange for loyalty. Additionally, member items, budget allocations to specific districts over which members have considerable control, are an important tool of leadership. And there is growth of centers of policy activity where a legislator has created a special area of influence through expertise and the development of special relationships with influential groups.