

State and Local Government

Lecture #1

Unit #1

Questions of Government

- How is government defined?
- What are the basic powers that every government holds?
- What are the four defining characteristics of the state?
- How have we attempted to explain the origin of the state?
- What is the purpose of government in the United States and other countries?

Government

- **Government** is the institution through which a society makes and enforces its public policies.

Four Parts of a State

<p>Population</p> <p>A state must have people, the number of which does not directly relate to its existence.</p>	<p>Territory</p> <p>A state must be comprised of land—territory with known and recognized boundaries.</p>
<p>Sovereignty</p> <p>Every state is sovereign. It has supreme and absolute power within its own territory and decides its own foreign and domestic policies.</p>	<p>Government</p> <p>Every state has a government — that is, it is politically organized.</p>

Purpose of Government

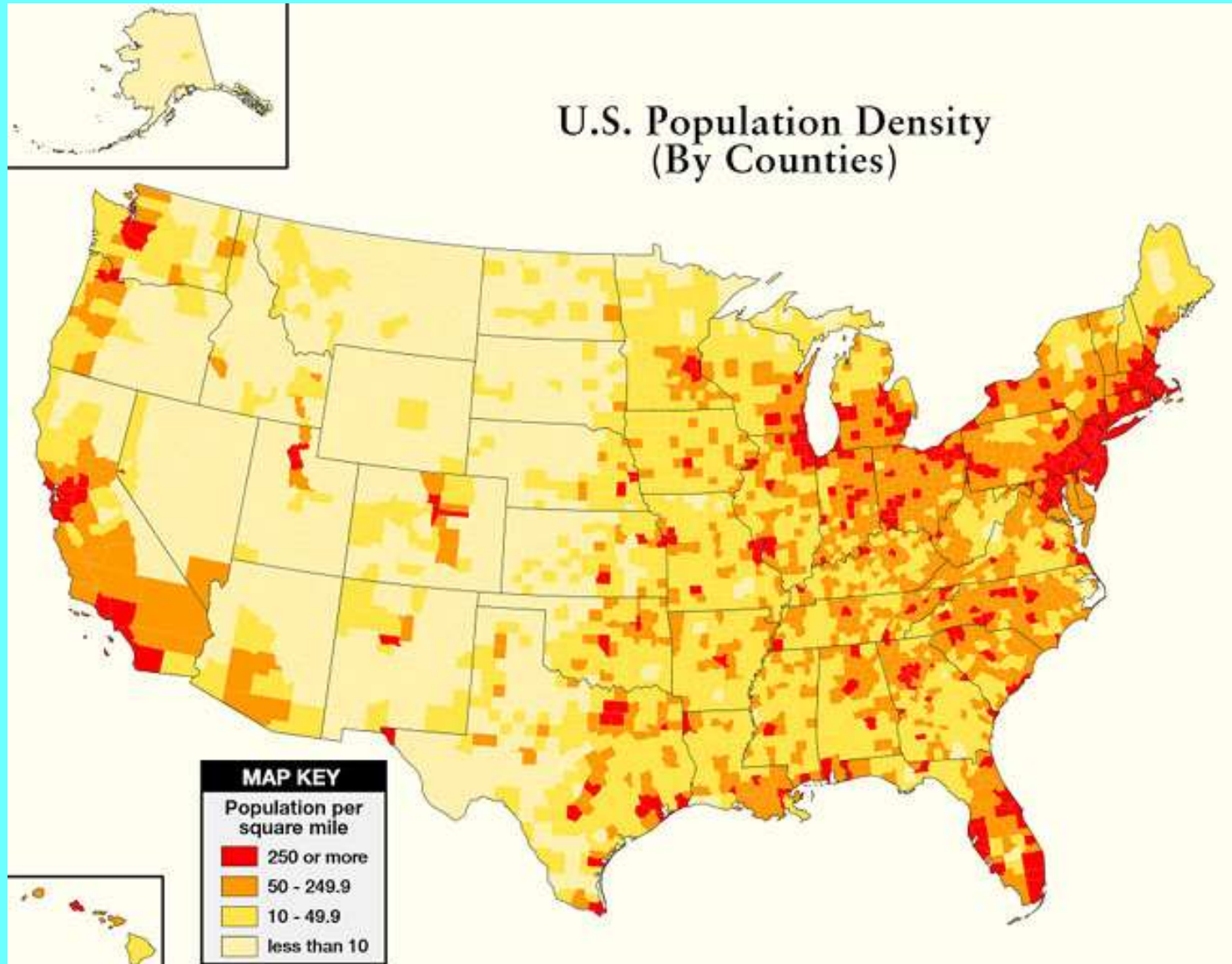
- **The main purposes of government are described in the Preamble of the Constitution of the United States:**
- “We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”

Democracy – Who Can Participate

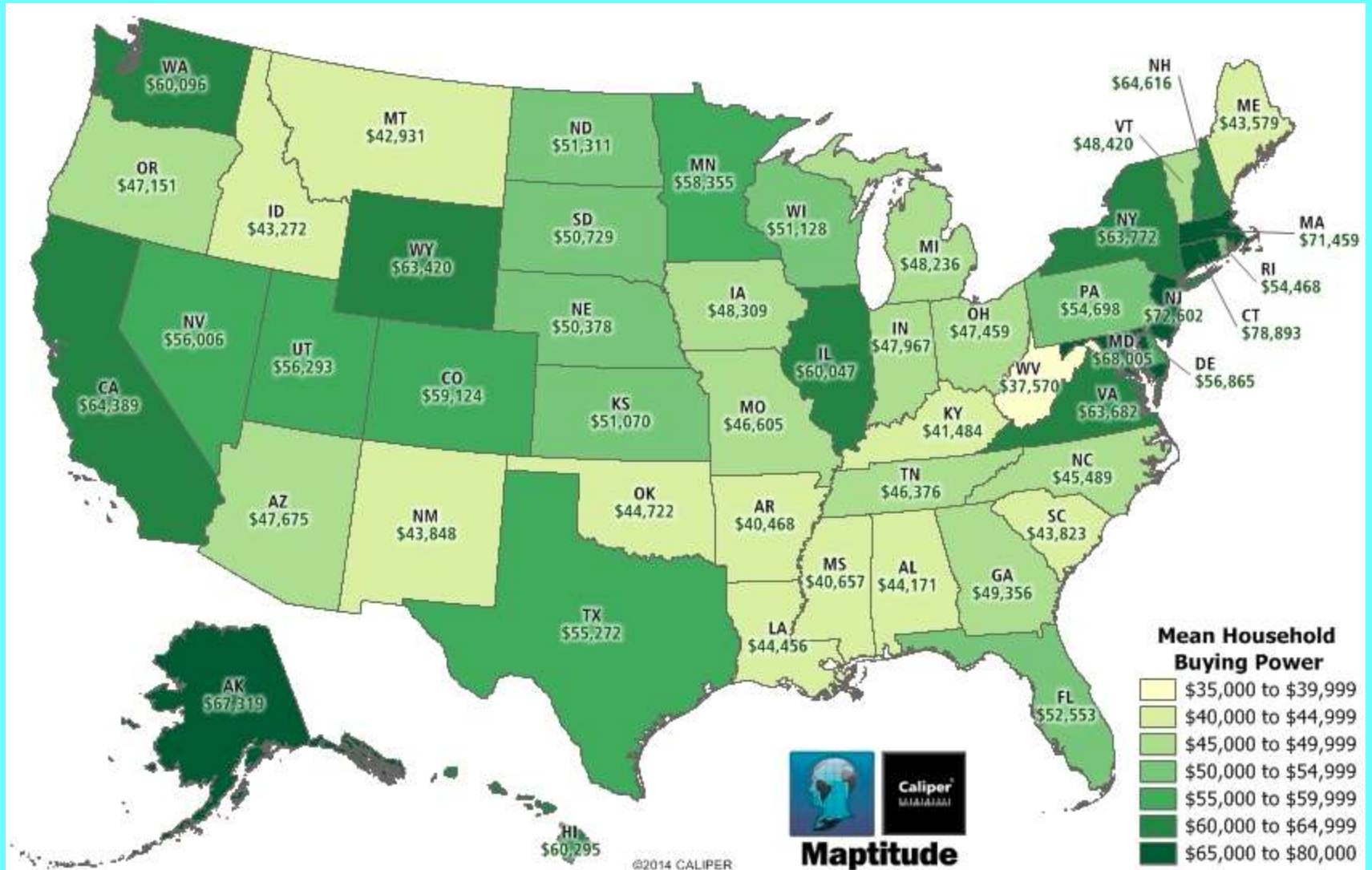
Democracy

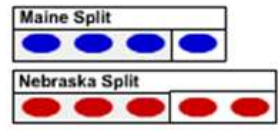
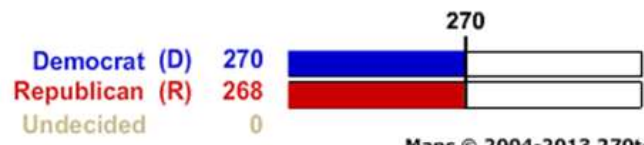
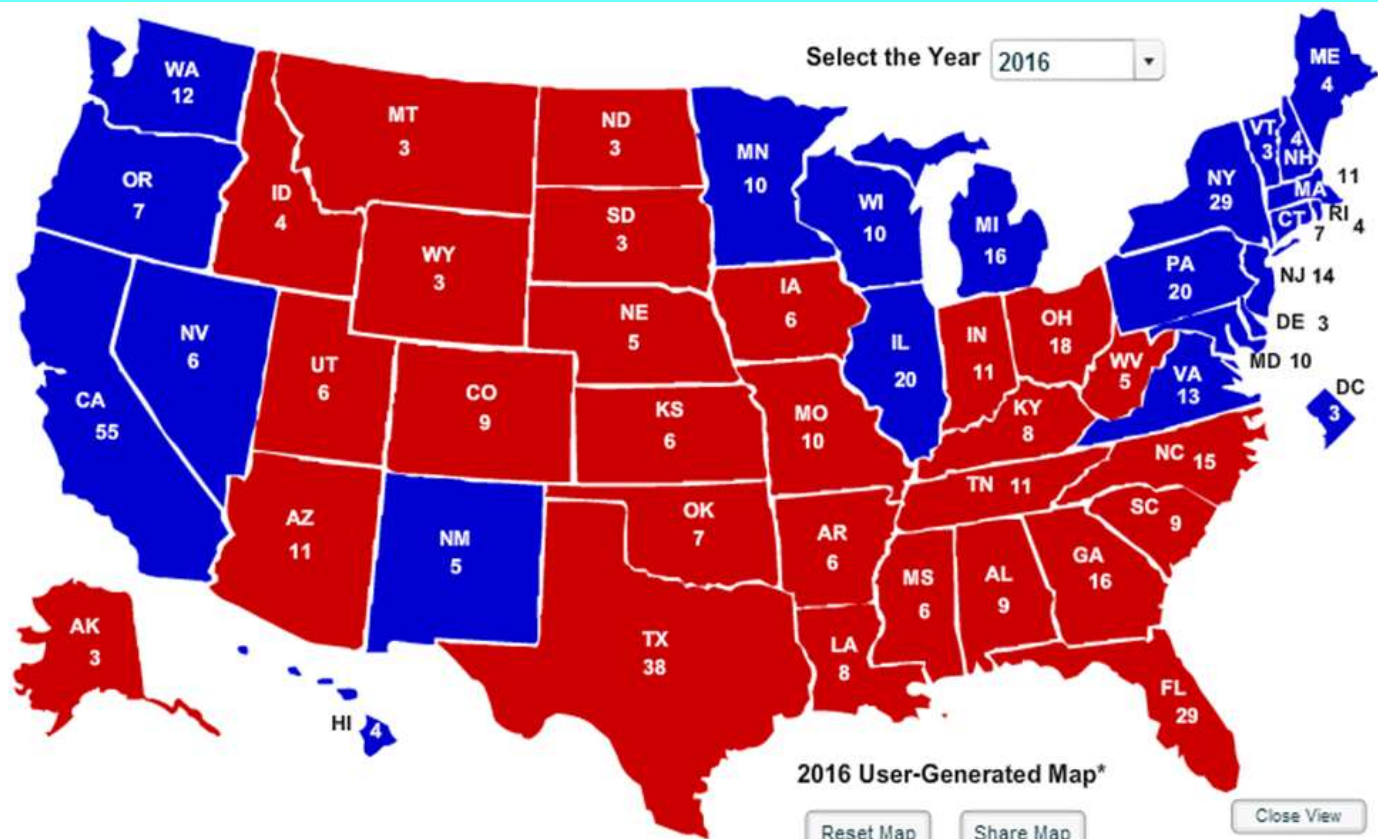
- In a democracy, supreme political authority rests with the people.
- A direct democracy exists where the will of the people is translated into law directly by the people themselves.
- In an indirect democracy, a small group of persons, chosen by the people to act as their representatives, expresses the popular will.

In a Direct Democracy, who would make the decisions for the United States?

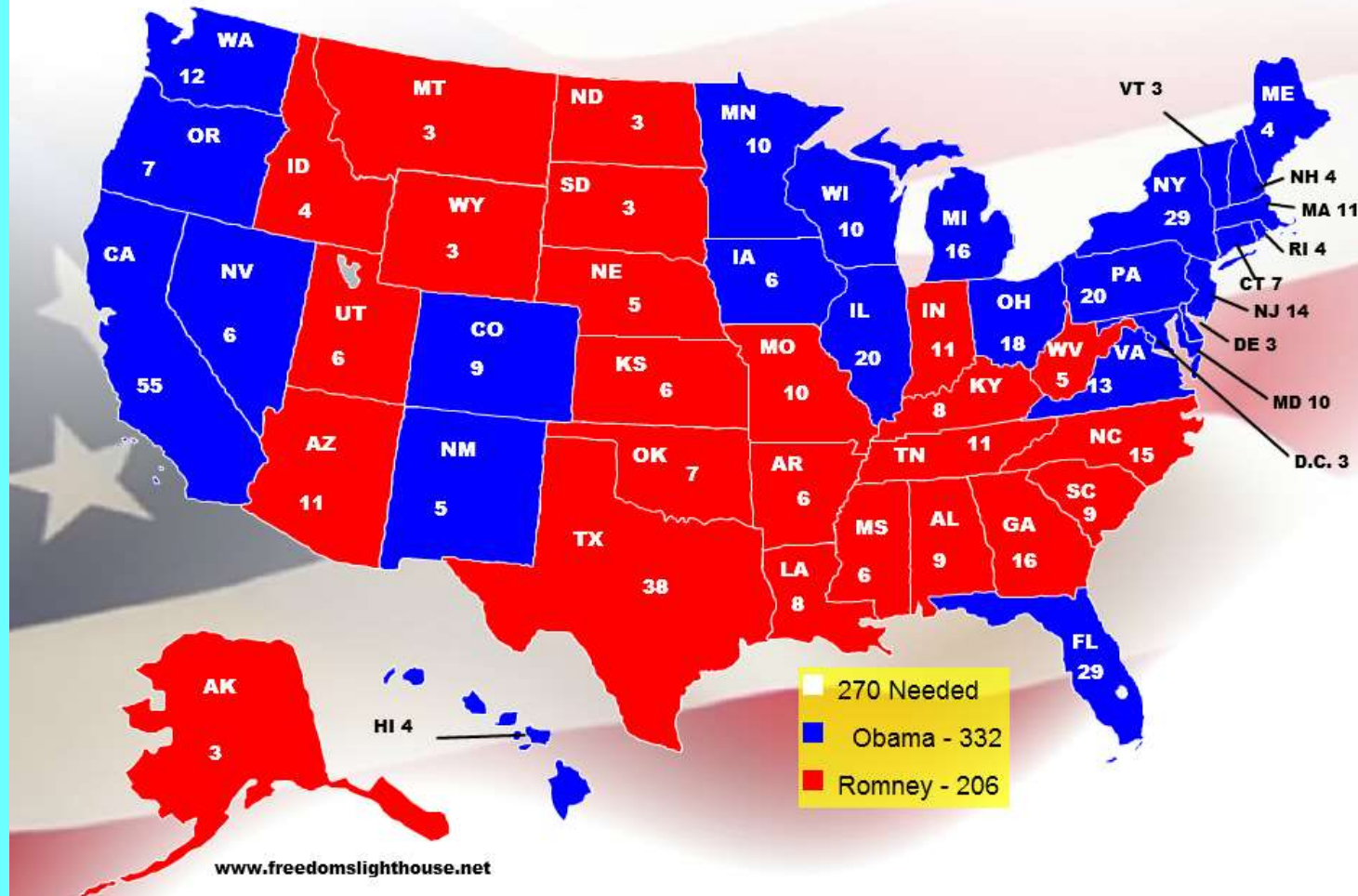


Where's the money?





2012 Presidential Election Electoral Vote Results



Classifying Governments

Governments can be classified by three different standards:

- (1)** Who can participate in the governing process.
- (2)** The geographic distribution of the governmental power within the state.
- (3)** The relationship between the legislative (lawmaking) and the executive (law-executing) branches of the government

The Federal System

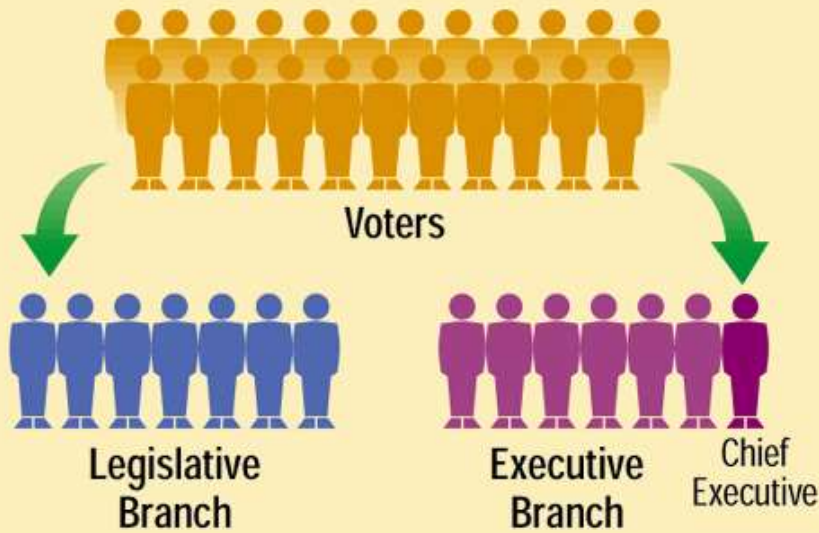
Federal Government

- A **federal government** is one in which the powers of government are divided between a central government and several local governments.
- An authority superior to both the central and local governments makes this **division of power** on a geographic basis.

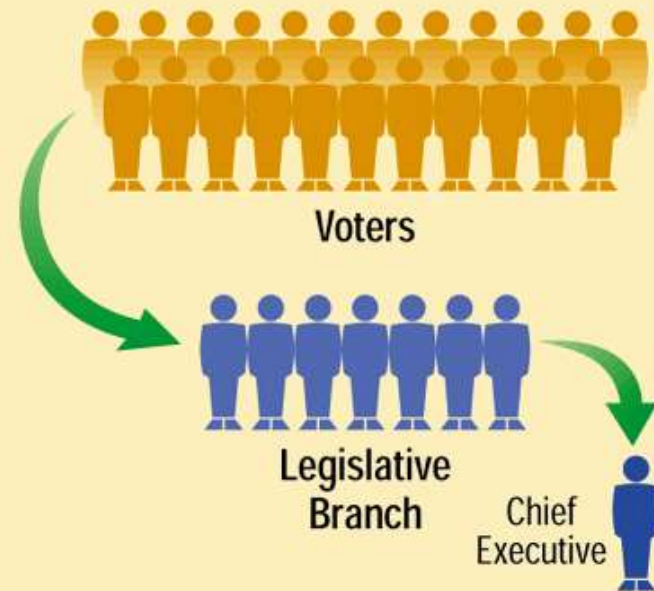
Presidential and Parliamentary Governments

Presidential and Parliamentary Governments

The Presidential Relationship Voters elect the Legislature and the Chief Executive who is part of the Executive Branch. The legislature and executive are independent and coequal.



The Parliamentary Relationship Voters elect the Legislature. The Chief Executive is drawn from the Legislature.



Foundations

The American concept of democracy rests on these basic notions:

- (1)** A recognition of the fundamental worth and dignity of every person;
- (2)** A respect for the equality of all persons;
- (3)** A faith in majority rule and an insistence upon minority rights;
- (4)** An acceptance of the necessity of compromise; and
- (5)** An insistence upon the widest possible degree of individual freedom.

Democracy and the Free Enterprise System

- The **free enterprise system** is an economic system characterized by private or corporate ownership of capital goods; investments that are determined by private decision rather than by state control; and determined in a free market.
- Decisions in a free enterprise system are determined by the **law of supply and demand**.
- An economy in which private enterprise exists in combination with a considerable amount of government regulation and promotion is called a **mixed economy**.