Government at the Local Level
Federalism

- Division of power between National, State, and Local Governments

We the People

Lasting freedom, peace & prosperity come from adhering to the laws of nature.
Federal Supremacy

- **McCulloch v. Maryland**
  - Federal Government is supreme
- No State’s constitution or laws can conflict with any form of federal law
  - “Full Faith & Credit”
  - “Privileges & Immunities”
- States can change the US Constitution
  - ¾ states approve
  - 2/3 state legislatures propose, ¾ approve
State Constitutions

- States’ Supreme Law
  - Cannot conflict with US Constitution or Federal Law
- Similarities
  - Limited Government
  - Separation of Powers
  - Checks and Balances
State Legislatures

• 49/50 are bicameral
  • Nebraska is unicameral
• Pretty much the same as Congress
• Exceptions
  • Easier for 3rd Party Candidates
  • Direct Democracy
    • Initiative and Referendum
Nebraska State Legislature

- Smallest Legislative branch in the country
  - Only 49 Senators
    - Each Senator represents about 35,000 people
Governor

• Head Executive of States

• Differences
  • Direct Democracy → Recall Elections
  • Line Item Veto → All but 6 have this
  • No Debt → Must Balance the Budget

• Many “Hats”
  • Supervise State Bureaucracy, Make Appointments, Military – National Guard, Legislative, Judicial Powers – Pardons, Ceremonial – Visits & Addresses
State Officers

- Lieutenant Governor
  - Similar to “Vice President”
- Secretary of State
- State Treasurer
- Attorney General
State Courts

• General Trial Courts and District Courts
  • Handle Civil and Criminal Law

• Municipal Courts
  • Handle City & County Ordinances

• Juvenile Courts
  • Handle cases involving minors

• Appellate Courts

• State Supreme Court
  • Handle issues with state’s constitution
County Government

- Major unit of government below the state
- Structure of counties:
  - Governing Board
  - Elected Officials (Ex. Sheriff)
  - Various Committees & Bureaucracy
- County Board Responsibilities:
  - Levy Taxes
  - Appropriate Funds
  - Incur Limited Debts
  - Corrections
  - Road Management
  - Welfare Programs
Township Government

• Subdivision of county
  • Usually Rural

• Structure
  • Similar to county but smaller

• Function
  • Handles roads, parks, zoning, services to people
Special Districts

- Independent units created to perform one job at the local level
  - Can cross county or city lines
- Examples:
  - School District
  - Water District
City Government

• Can have a strong mayor or weak mayor
  • Bigger cities prefer strong mayor with more power

• Provide Services
  • Police/Fire Protection
  • Street Maintenance
  • Sewer and Water
  • Parks and Recreation
  • Can own businesses

• Employ Millions throughout U.S.
Financing State and Local

• Sales Taxes (Regressive Tax)
• Income Taxes (Progressive Tax)
• Property Taxes
• Inheritance or Estate Taxes
• Business Taxes
• License Fees
• Borrowing
  • Must “Balance the Books” unlike Congress