

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Exploring the Role of Congressional Committees in Reviewing and Amending Bills

### Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. Congressional committees play a vital role in the legislative process by specializing in specific policy areas, thoroughly examining bills, holding hearings to gather input, debating proposed amendments, and making recommendations on whether bills should proceed to the full chamber for consideration. Their functions help ensure that proposed laws are well-crafted, address important issues, and have bipartisan input, contributing to the overall effectiveness of the legislative process.
2. Committees help ensure that proposed laws are well-crafted by carefully reviewing bills, holding hearings to gather expert opinions and stakeholder input, and debating proposed amendments. The involvement of members from both political parties in committees also promotes bipartisan input, leading to more balanced and informed legislation.
3. Transparency and public involvement in the committee review and amendment of bills are crucial for a healthy democracy. They allow for open debate, diverse perspectives, and accountability in the legislative process. Public hearings, in particular, provide a platform for experts, stakeholders, and concerned citizens to voice their opinions and influence the shaping of laws.
4. An example of a bill that underwent significant changes in committee is the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or "Obamacare." During the committee process, various amendments were proposed, debated, and incorporated into the final bill. These changes addressed issues such as coverage mandates, subsidies, and Medicaid expansion. The committee's work improved the proposed law by addressing concerns, refining its provisions, and making it more comprehensive.

