

Examine the ways in which US presidents and UK prime ministers may seek to influence legislation (Comparative: 12 marker)

1) POWERS OF PERSUASION

- **Both the president and the prime minister have the ability to use their powers of persuasion to get legislation that want through**
- In the UK, the PM can seek to try and encourage MPs to vote for their legislation in order to get it passed
- By try and persuading the MPs to vote with them, they are able to use this to make sure that the legislation they want will go through and so influencing the legislation that is decided on in parliament
- **EXAMPLE:** In order for Theresa May to get her bills passed, she had to consistently urge the DUP to vote for this legislation and shows her using her powers of persuasion
- The President will also use his powers of persuasion to get the legislation he wishes to be passed
- Due to the separation of powers, the President needs enough people in both the House and the Senate to agree with his bills in order for him to influence legislation
- By persuading members of Congress to vote for his policies, he can make sure that the legislation that is getting through is the legislation that he agrees with
- **EXAMPLE:** an important budget vote in the House in August 1993, President Clinton phoned and persuaded a rep of Pennsylvania, this resulted in her casting the crucial 218th vote to ensure the passage of his budget

2) ADDRESSES TO CONGRESS/PARLIAMENT

- **Both the president and the pm are able to influence legislation through their respective addresses to their political institution**
- In the UK, the PM has PMQs every week, here they get to answer questions by members of parliament on their legislation
- This helps them to urge the importance of their legislation and how their legislation should be passed in order to help the country
- They will also be able to clear up any issues with their legislation which could help to turn even more people on their side and vote for the PMs legislation
- **The president has his state of the union address**
- In this address, he appeals to Congress and outlines the successes and failures he has faced in his legislation
- Through this he can propose further his legislative agenda and tell Congress what he feels needs to be prioritised in order to influence his legislation
- as it is broadcasted to the people all over America, he is not only directly influencing Congress directly but indirectly through the people, who may then urge their congressional member to pass certain legislation form the president
- **EXAMPLE:** In his state of the Union in 2002, George Bush outlined his policies for the 'War on Terror' and tried to provoke fear in Congressional member in order for them to support this

3) WHIPS

- **Both the president and the prime minister have the ability to use whips in order to influence legislation**
- In the UK, the whip system is very strong as there can be consequences if the PM's party members do not vote how they wish to

- This means that MPs will vote with the pm in order to avoid these consequences which effectively lets the PM decide which legislation will get passed as they will use the whips to make sure the bills they want will have enough votes to get through
- **EXAMPLE:** Theresa May has used many 3 line whips on Brexit Bills to ensure that she will get enough votes and her legislation will be passed
- While the Whip system is weaker in the US and the President doesn't have whip specifically, he can appeal to the whips in both houses in an attempt to influence legislation
- By doing this, he can get member of Congress to vote along party lines in order to vote for the legislation he wishes to pass which are in line with his policies