

Name and Date _____

Handout 2: State and Local Government

What are the roles of state and local government in the U.S. political system?

Part 1: Division of Power

Directions: While many leaders and levels of government could assist with the problems that you identified in Handout 1, some levels of government may have more authority than others. To determine which level of government would be the most appropriate for the students to work with, read the excerpt from the U.S. Constitution below and, as a group, answer the questions that follow. Each student should complete their own handout.

The Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states . . . or to the people.

1. Based on your previous knowledge about the U.S. Constitution, select **three** powers of the U.S. Congress.
 - A. writing legislative bills
 - B. issuing driver's licenses
 - C. constructing school buildings
 - D. declaring laws unconstitutional
 - E. approving international treaties
 - F. stopping the printing of the \$2 bill
2. After learning about the enumerated powers of Congress, a student in the class claims that Congress has no stated power related to the issues at the abandoned factory.

Explain why state and local governments have the power to help solve the problem. Use evidence from the Tenth Amendment to support your answer.

3. The word bank shows some leadership positions within local and state governments. As a group, fill in the chart by identifying the level and branch of government for each leadership position. Each student should complete their own chart.

Leadership Positions			
governor	mayor	city councilor	state senator

Leadership Positions	Executive Branch	Legislative Branch
State Government		
Local Government		

4. The word bank shows some responsibilities of local and state government. As a group, fill in the chart by identifying which responsibilities are conducted by each branch of government. Each student should complete their own chart.

Responsibilities			
pass laws	maintain highways	enforce laws and safety codes	create safety codes

Executive Branch	Legislative Branch

Part 2: Taking Action

Directions: Students in the class wonder if there are any laws or regulations that prevent property owners from abandoning their property. Their teacher suggests that the students search the Code of Massachusetts Regulations, a set of laws about safe conditions for buildings. These laws are passed by the Massachusetts state legislature and enforced by local governments. The students find the following summary of one regulation.

Code of Massachusetts Regulations

The owner of any piece of land shall be responsible for maintaining the piece of land in a clean and sanitary condition and free from garbage. The owner of such piece of land shall correct any condition which affects the health or safety and well-being of the occupants of any dwelling or of the general public. The inspector shall determine if there are conditions which may endanger or damage the health or safety and well-being of an occupant or the public.

The students decide to contact state and local leaders to help with the abandoned factory. Write an email that they could use to request the help from the governor, the mayor, a state representative, or a city councilor. The email should include evidence from the Code of Massachusetts Regulations to support the request for help and to suggest how the leader should use their power to help.

To:

Subject: