Classification of Senators

Under Article I, section 3, clause 2, of the Constitution of the United States, relating to the classification of Senators in the First and succeeding Congresses, it was provided that, “Immediately after they shall be assembled in consequence of the first election they shall be divided as equally as may be into three classes. The seats of the Senators of the first class shall be vacated at the expiration of the second year, of the second class at the expiration of the fourth year, and of the third class at the expiration of the sixth year, so that one-third may be chosen every second year.” The classification of the Senators of the First Congress was made in accordance with this provision by lot. The following table shows the classes to which the Senators of the First Congress, and from States subsequently admitted into the Union, were severally assigned, and the succession in each State to the end of the second session of the One Hundred Tenth Congress.

Terms of Senators

Technically, pursuant to the Twentieth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, ratified January 23, 1933, the terms of Members of the Senate commence at noon on the third day of January and end six years later at noon on the third day of January. In view of the impracticality of dealing with split days, however, it has been the long established practice for payment of salaries, computation of allowances, and recording of service to credit a Member for the full day of the third of January and to consider the term as ended at the close of business on the second of January six years later. Accordingly, the service of Members of the Senate is shown on that basis in the following tables.