

Role of Political Parties

1. Select Candidates

Political parties nominate candidates for political office. They narrow the field from a multitude of wannabes to a manageable few credible candidates. This simplifies the voters' role and brings a certain order to what could be a chaotic electoral process

2. Mobilize Voters

Political parties inform and energize their members. They send out brochures, run media campaigns, knock on doors, and call voters on the phone. Individual candidates can do the same thing, but parties maintain elaborate networks of state and local offices that can be immediately pressed into the service of a candidate once the party nomination is secured. In addition, parties have fundraising apparatuses in place that simplify their candidates' ability to finance their campaigns.

3. Facilitate Governance

Parties also bring order to the process of policymaking. As party members, individual politicians have a ready-made group of allies that will usually cooperate with their efforts to pass and implement legislation. In addition, party alliances close the gap between the legislative and executive branches. While separated by the Constitution, the existence of political parties narrows the distance between the branches and helps them work together.

4. Monitor the Opposing Party in Power

Parties also serve as critical watchdogs for the public. The adversarial relationship between the major parties ensures that the party out of power will keep a close eye on its opponent and notify the public of any wrongdoing or policy misstep