# Q33 – Who does a member of the House of Representatives represent?

**DOUGLAS GINSBURG, Federal Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals, D.C. Circuit:**
Members of the House of Representatives officially represent the citizens in their districts – but, in practice, other residents as well. A district may also include students from abroad, green card holders, and other noncitizens. Though they cannot vote in federal elections, they are a part of the member's district.

So how is a congressional district formed? The size of the House of Representatives is fixed at 435 members – so there are 435 districts. Boundaries are drawn so each district has roughly the same number of residents. In New York state, a tiny district in New York City is densely populated, while a rural district upstate is geographically much larger. Yet the population is about the same.
The most populous states, of course, have the most districts. Every ten years – after the census – district lines are redrawn to reflect changes in population. If a state loses enough people, it may lose a district, while a growing state may gain a district.
If you are a citizen, then whatever district you live in, and whoever represents you in the House of Representatives, remember to do your part in the governing process: Vote.