

# Delegate or Trustee?

**Directions**

Read each description and decide whether each representative is acting as a delegate or a trustee. Support your answer with evidence from **Handout A: Background Essay: The Nature of Representation in the U.S. Congress**.

**Congressman Alvarez**

Several times a year Congressman Alvarez hires a political research firm to survey his constituents about different issues facing Congress. He instructs his staff to carefully monitor email, letters, and phone calls from people in the district, and present him with a weekly summary of their opinions. Congressman Alvarez believes that if he listens to his constituents, knows their thoughts and opinions, and votes accordingly, he should have no problem getting re-elected. Is Mr. Alvarez acting as a delegate or as a trustee? Why?

**Congresswoman Zito**

Congresswoman Zito spends as much time as she can in her district, talking with constituents, both to hear their ideas, and to explain her vision about the role and direction of government. She regularly appears on TV programs, where she debates other politicians about the issues facing Congress. Few people in her district have any doubt about where she stands, and she is confident that by remaining consistent in her vision, and explaining her vision to her constituents, she will have little difficulty in getting re-elected. Is Ms. Zito acting as a delegate or a trustee? Why?