

## Role of Political Parties

America's political system is often called a "two party" system. As the name implies, the political landscape is dominated by two parties. Since the 1860s the two major parties have been the Republican and the Democratic. However, in Georgia it was not until the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that Republicans became a political force in the state.

**The role of political parties in the United States and Georgia is for groups of like-minded individuals who share common beliefs and ideas to work together in hopes of electing their members to political offices.**

As previously stated, Georgia was dominated by one party for much of its history, though today, Republicans and Democrats both hold elected offices. No matter what party someone belongs to, political parties offer voters a choice in deciding which elected official best represents their interests.

Though two parties dominate the political scene there are several minor or "third parties" parties as well in some elections, these political parties cause run-off elections. An example was in 2008 senate race when Libertarian Allen Buckley caused a run-off between Saxby Chambliss (R) and Jim Martin (D).

**Three main purposes of political parties** are to provide a place where likeminded individuals can meet and select a candidate of their choice. Second they provide money to that candidate to use during elections to help get elected. Finally, political parties provide voters a choice in the election.

## Historical Connection

George Washington's Farewell Address announced that he would not seek a third term as president. Originally published in David C. Claypoole's *American Daily Advertiser* on September 19, 1796, Washington devoted much of the address to domestic issues of the time, warning against the rise of political parties and sectionalism as a threat to national unity. In the area of foreign affairs, Washington called for America "to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world." Although the ideas expressed were Washington's, Alexander Hamilton wrote a large part of the address

