**Congressional Debate Speech Checklist**

**INTRODUCTION:** Does my speech….

* …address my audience?
* “Fellow Congressmen; Dear Senators; etc.”
* …have a clear purpose?
* “I stand in Affirmation/Negation; I am for/against, etc.”
* …have a preview of my contentions (thesis statement)?
* “for the following reasons; for the following three contentions, etc.”

**BODY:** Does my speech….

* …contain 2-3 strong claims
* …cite each source (preferably name and date published)
* …explain how your evidence support your claim

**CONCLUSION:** Does my speech….

* …Summarize my claims
* …restate your stance/position (I urge you to vote in the affirmative/negative…)
* …open yourself to questioning

While judging a speech is clearly, to a certain extent, subjective, there are certain key standards that distinguish effectiveness:[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congressional_Debate#cite_note-9)

* **Originality of Thought**: advances debate rather than repeats previously stated ideas; refutes opposing arguments.
* **Organization and Unity**: cohesively links ideas.
* **Evidence and Logic**: cites credible sources, connecting to claims.
* **Delivery**: extemporaneous speaking vs. reciting a manuscript, seriousness of purpose, style and poise.
* **Questioning**: how well the debater defends her/his position and claims made