

THE TRIBAL TRIBUNE

cartoon // Rose Holstein

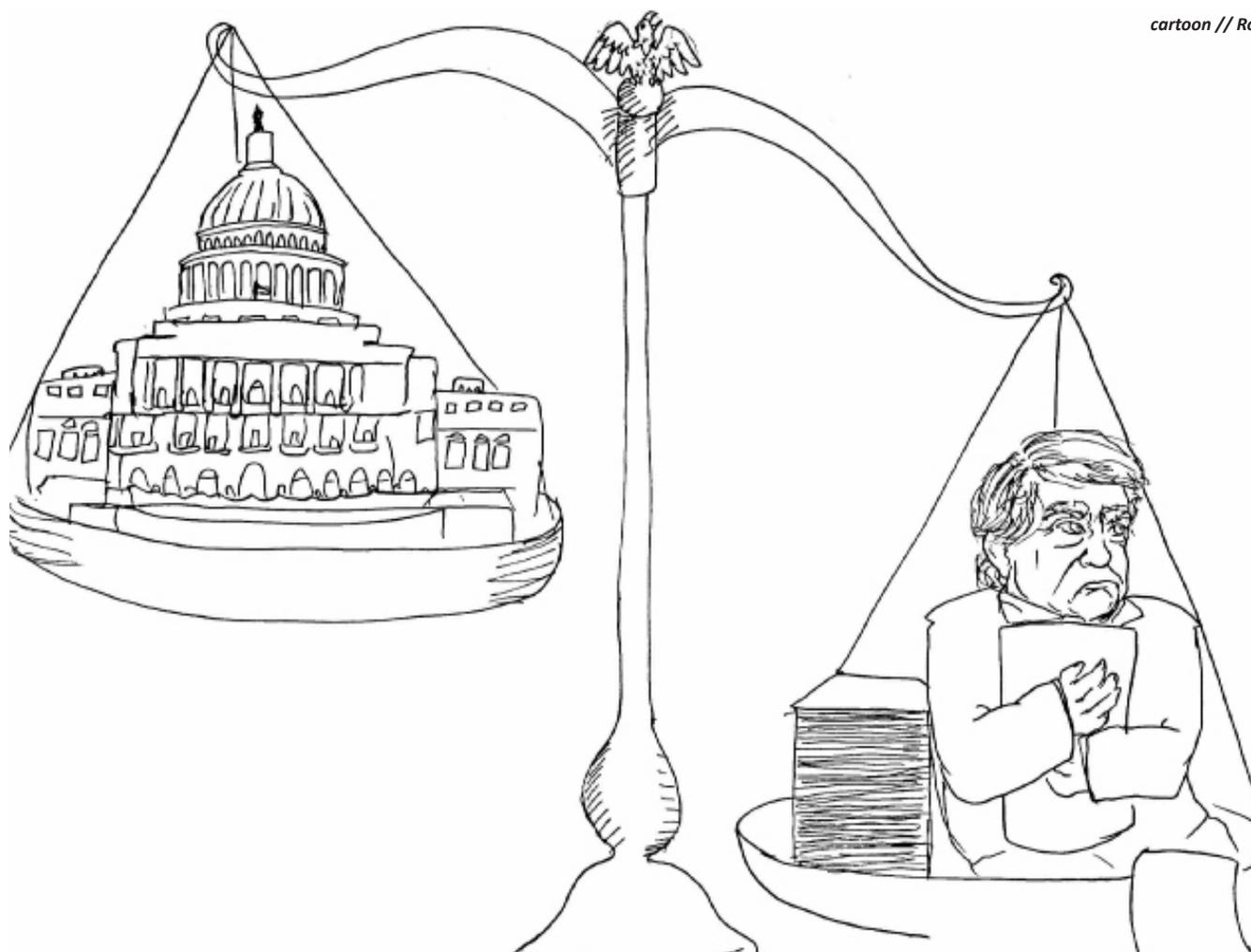
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Importance of balance

Over 250 years of history, thousands upon thousands of lives and every decision and intricacy of one of the most powerful governments in the world lies in the fabric of two words: checks and balances.

And in execution, this can mean different things to different people. The way that checks and balances within the U.S government is laid out in the Constitution can be vague, and is something that is still heavily debated in classrooms and courtrooms, by families at the dinner table and constitutional lawyers alike.

But one overarching theme is clear, regardless of how much time has passed since the birth of the Constitution in 1787: no one branch of government is to supercede another. No one branch, one group or one leader is to overpower the others. This government was designed by The People and for The People, and this is a sentiment that stretches far beyond party lines.

And it's something that has been slipping away generation by generation, and has come to a breaking point.

President Donald Trump has signed 17 ex-

ecutive orders in his first 14 days as President -- more than the past three Presidents did in their first 100 days (Clinton, Bush and Obama all averaging at about 14 in their first 100, according to rollcall.com)

And regardless of your political party, there's something extremely alarming about this. Because it shows not just a general shift of power from the other branches of government to the office of the President, but a shift from the power of millions of citizens to the power of one man.

In fact, the reason Presidents typically use the "grant of executive power" outlines in Article II of the Constitution is to bypass Congress. So if there's already such a significant amount of legislation that President Trump thinks will be unable to pass Congress -- whether it's due to ideology or in some cases, Constitutional legality (such as the controversy over the Muslim ban), -- what does that say about the tone of an administration? That right off the bat, the only way to achieve a set agenda is by force?

We, the People, are being removed from the very process that the Founding Fathers fought to ensure we had. Our elected representatives are seen as a hindrance, rather than a vital part of our legislative system. It's like the old "Well

Mom said..." trick you used to play on your parents -- you know one parent will say no to something, so you skip them and go to the other. Except in this scenario, the child skips both parents and does as he pleases anyway, before either parent has the chance to intervene.

The electorate, Congress and the Supreme Court are not obstacles. We are not roadblocks. We are not "in the way." We are the checks and balances. We are the system. And we cannot be bullied out of our own legislative process.

If the President really cares about the system he swore to protect, he should respect it. If something is controversial, let it pass through the steps. Let it be talked about.

Nothing good is forced.

Editorial