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Sommario/riassunto	Since the mid-1970s, the House and Senate have convened early organization meetings in November or December of even-numbered years to prepare for the start of the new Congress in January. The purposes of these meetings are both educational and organizational. Educational sessions range from legislative procedures and staff hiring to current issues. Organizational sessions elect class officers, party leaders, and chamber officers; name committee representatives and other party officials; and select committee chairmen and often committee members. Such actions are officially ratified at the start of the new Congress.