



Written by [David Kelly](#) on December 15, 2023

Celebrate Liberty This Bill of Rights Day

Bill of Rights Day commemorates the ratification of the first 10 Amendments to the U.S. Constitution that congress adopted on December 15, 1791. The [Bill of Rights](#) guarantees civil rights and liberties such as freedom of speech, press, and religion, and the right to bear arms. It sets rules for due process of law and reserves all powers not delegated to the federal government to the people or the states.

The first 10 Amendments are a result of years of debate and deliberation by the Anti-Federalists, those who oppsed to the ratification of the Constitution as they feared that the new national government would be too powerful and thus threaten individual liberties given the absence of a bill of rights.

It is the opposition by the Anti-Federalists — who favored strong state governments, a weak central government, and the strengthening of individual liberties and freedom — that many Americans today should celebrate. Their efforts built the framework for our nation’s success as the greatest ongoing self-governance experiment in the history of the world.

Prior to the adoption of the Bill of Rights, both the Federalists — or those who favored a strong centralized government — and the Anti-Federalists published series of articles and delivered numerous speeches for and against ratification of the Constitution.

Those independent writings and speeches have come to be known collectively as [The Anti-Federalist Papers](#) and [The Federalist Papers](#), the latter being written in support of the new constitution by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay under the pseudonym Publius.

With the exception of Patrick Henry and others who eventually came out publicly against the ratification of the Constitution, the majority of the Anti-Federalists stated their positions under pseudonyms as well.

According to the [Free Speech Center](#) at Middle Tennessee State University, “historians have concluded that the major Anti-Federalist writers included Robert Yates (Brutus), most likely George Clinton (Cato), Samuel Bryan (Centinel), and either Melancton Smith or Richard Henry Lee (Federal Farmer).”

In addition to the Bill of Rights, or first 10 Amendments, 17 additional amendments have been



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ratified by Congress, for a total of 27 [constitutional amendments](#) to date. Twenty-five of these are currently active. The two amendments of the Constitution that are inactive are the 18th Amendment (Prohibition) and the 21st Amendment (Repeal of Prohibition).

The authority to amend the [Constitution of the United States](#) is derived from [Article V of the Constitution](#). An amendment may be proposed either by the Congress with a two-thirds majority vote in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, or by a constitutional convention called for by two-thirds of the State legislatures. A proposed amendment becomes part of the Constitution as soon as it is ratified by three-fourths of the states (currently 38 of 50). None of the 27 amendments to the Constitution have been proposed by constitutional convention.

As Americans celebrate Bill of Rights Day, our rights, liberties, and freedoms are at risk, with the Article V movement, or “Convention of States,” seeking to make [proposals](#) to “limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government, impose fiscal restraints, and place term limits on federal officials.”

President Biden’s [Proclamation on Bill of Rights Day](#) highlights that the debate and discussion over our Constitution is far from over. Biden used the proclamation to advance his woke agenda and views on constitutional rights, sharing his disappointment with the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* and recent “wave of anti-LGBTQI+ bills ... threatening Americans’ freedom to live openly and authentically.”

However, the president rightly stated:

Freedom is never guaranteed; it requires constant vigilance.... We must remember that democracies do not have to die violently — they can die quietly, when people fail to stand up for the values and guarantees enshrined in our Nation’s Constitution. This Bill of Rights Day, let us all recommit to safeguarding the fundamental freedoms secured in those first 10 Amendments....



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