

Proposing a 28th Amendment to the United States Constitution

Background: The U.S. Constitution has 27 Amendments. The first 10, the Bill of Rights, were ratified in 1791, and the Constitution has been amended 17 additional times over the past 230 years. The most recent amendment (#27) was added in 1992 and dealt with Congressional pay raises.

Directions: You have been appointed to a committee to create a new amendment. Review the amendments on the back of this paper and think about why they were enacted throughout our history. Now, think about current events and society around you. What would be a good amendment to add that could make a process simpler, bring more equality to the people, or just simply help the common good? **Prepare a presentation to propose your amendment to the class. There will be a class vote and prize for the approved amendment.**

Below are a few ideas that have actually been suggested. This should help you get you started.

- *Immigration
- *Term Limits for Congress
- *Right to Life
- *Equal Rights
- *Electoral College Reform
- *Environmental Issues

- *Gun Control
- *Minimum Wage
- *College Tuition Assistance
- *Healthcare
- *Voting Rights/Qualifications

1. What is a current problem the U.S. faces that could be solved through the addition of a U.S. Amendment to the Constitution?

2. Who would this benefit? What are some pros and cons? Can you think of any negative impacts or consequences this may cause?

3. Why should your peers vote for this amendment. Remember, an amendment is a HUGE deal (It has only happened 27 times) SO you need to sell us on this!

United States Amendments 1-27

Amendment XV - African American Suffrage
3rd CIVIL WAR AMENDMENT - African Americans receive the right to vote....note that there is no mention of gender...

Amendment XVI - Income Taxes
Congress has the power to lay and collect taxes on incomes

Amendment XVII- Direct Election of Senators
The states have the power to directly elect senators to represent them. (before this, the state legislature decided who the senators were)

Amendment XVIII- Prohibition of Liquor
(1919) Forbade people to make, sell, or transport liquor.

Amendment XIX- Women's Suffrage
Gives women the power to vote

Amendment XX- Terms of President and Congress
Changes the date that newly elected presidents and members of Congress take office close to election time. President: January 20th, Congress: January 3rd

Amendment XXI- Repeal of Prohibition
Repeals the 18th amendment.

Amendment XXII- Limitation of Presidents to Two Terms
No person can be elected president more than twice.

Amendment XXIII- Suffrage in the District of Columbia
Allows citizens of Washington D.C. to vote in the presidential elections. However, they cannot vote for members of Congress.

Amendment XXIV- Poll Taxes
Forbids making voters pay a poll tax before they can vote in a national election.

Amendment XXV- Presidential Disability and Succession
If president is removed, dies, or resigns, the vice president becomes president. The president fulfills a vice president vacancy, by a majority vote of both Houses of Congress.

Amendment XXVI- Suffrage for 18-Year-Olds
Voting age moved to 18

Amendment XXVII- Congressional Pay Raises
Any increase in congressional pay does not go into effect until after the next regular election of the House of Representatives.

Amendment I - Freedom of Religion, Speech and the Press; Rights of Assembly and Petition.

Amendment II - Right to Bear Arms
The amendment was adopted so that Congress could not disarm a state militia.

Amendment III - Housing of Soldiers
Grew directly out of an old complaint against the British, who had forced people to take soldiers into their homes.

Amendment IV - Search and Seizure
You may not be searched or have property seized without probable cause and/or a search warrant.

Amendment V - Rights of the accused (Self-incrimination, Double Jeopardy, Due Process, Just Compensation)

Amendment VI- Rights to a Fair Trial (Speedy and Public Trial by Jury, Tried in state where crime was committed, Informed of charges against accused, Witnesses, Right to a lawyer)

Amendment VII- Rights in Civil Cases (Trial by Jury in civil cases over \$20)

Amendment VIII - Cruel and Unusual Punishment
Bails, fines and punishments must be humane and fit the crime committed

Amendment IX - Rights Retained by the People
Any rights not listed in the Constitution are still protected

Amendment X - Powers Retained by the States and the People
States or people have all powers not given to national government. (ie: marriage)

Amendment XI - Lawsuits Against States
It is impossible for the citizen of one state to sue another state. (So, Salem can't sue Iowa)

Amendment XII - Election of President and Vice President
(1804) Provides that members of the electoral college (called electors), vote for one person as president and one person as vice president.

Amendment XIII - Abolition of Slavery
1st CIVIL WAR AMENDMENT - Slavery is illegal

Amendment XIV- Civil Rights
2nd CIVIL WAR AMENDMENT - Slaves receive Citizenship and protection of due process