

AMENDMENTS TO THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION, PROPOSED BY CONGRESS, AND RATIFIED BY THE LEGISLATURES OF THE SEVERAL STATES, PURSUANT TO THE FIFTH ARTICLE OF THE ORIGINAL CONSTITUTION

AMENDMENTS TO THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION, SUGGESTED BY CONGRESS, AND APPROVED BY THE STATES, LIKE THE FIFTH ARTICLE OF THE ORIGINAL CONSTITUTION SAYS ...



*The first ten Amendments are also known as*

## *"The Bill of Rights"*



### *Amendment I (December 15, 1791)*

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

### *Amendment II (December 15, 1791)*

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

### *Amendment III (December 15, 1791)*

No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

### *Amendment I Individual freedoms*

Congress cannot make any law to: create a government church, keep people from practicing any religion they please (or not), keep people from writing or saying what is on their minds, keep people from getting together peacefully, or keep people from asking the government to hear their complaints.

### *Amendment 2 Gun ownership as foundation for militias*

Since we need a militia (National Guard) to protect the country, citizens can own firearms (guns).

### *Amendment 3 Housing of soldiers*

In peacetime, citizens do not have to let soldiers stay in their homes. If there is a war, citizens do not have to let soldiers stay in their homes, unless there is a law to describe how it should happen.

*Amendment IV  
(December 15, 1791)*

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

*Amendment V  
(December 15, 1791)*

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb, nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation.

*Amendment VI  
(December 15, 1791)*

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have

*Amendment 4  
Search and arrest warrants for  
property and people*

People, and their houses, papers and other things they own, are protected from the police taking their property or looking at their property without a warrant (permission given by a judge). If there is a need to search or take property, a judge must issue a warrant for a very good reason, supported by an oath, and the warrant must describe what is being looked at and what is being taken.

*Amendment 5  
Rights of individuals  
in criminal cases*

Civilians cannot be made to defend themselves against a crime the government says he or she committed under federal law, unless a group of people (called a grand jury) agree that the charge is real. Then, that citizen can be officially accused (charged with a crime). Cases involving the armed forces or the National Guard are exceptions during wartime. No citizen can be held responsible for the same crime more than once. No citizen can be made to testify against himself or herself, and the government cannot take away a citizen's life, freedom, or property without applying the law. Private property cannot be taken for public use without a fair payment being made to its owner.

*Amendment 6  
Rights for a fair trial*

In criminal trials, a citizen blamed for a crime has the right to a quick, public trial; decided by an open-minded jury; in the general place (district) where the crime was

been committed; which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defence.

*Amendment VII*  
(December 15, 1791)

In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

*Amendment VIII*  
(December 15, 1791)

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

*Amendment IX*  
(December 15, 1791)

The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

committed—these places are determined by law. A citizen blamed for a crime must be told what the crime is that he or she is being blamed for, and why he or she is being blamed. The citizen blamed for a crime has the right to face the witnesses against him or her (the person or people who said this person did something wrong), and to be allowed to bring witnesses on his or her side (people who say the person didn't do anything wrong) into court, and to have a lawyer for his or her defense.

*Amendment 7*  
*Rights in civil cases*

In common law cases where somebody sues someone else for more than twenty dollars, that person has a right to a trial by jury. No fact examined by a jury can be re-examined in any court, except according to the current rules.

*Amendment 8*  
*Bails, fines punishments*

Citizens accused of a crime will not be required to pay bail that is out of proportion to the crime. Fines (money) charged to punish criminals must be reasonable, and any other punishment must not be cruel or unusual.

*Amendment 9*  
*Rights retained by the people*

Just because some rights are listed in the Constitution does not mean that United States citizens do not have other rights.

**Fast Fact**

The entire Constitution is only 4,440 words.



*Amendment X*  
(December 15, 1791)

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

*Amendment XI*  
(February 7, 1795)

The Judicial power of the United States shall not be construed to extend to any suit in law or equity, commenced or prosecuted against one of the United States by Citizens of another State, or by Citizens or Subjects of any Foreign State.

*Amendment XII*  
(June 15, 1804)

The Electors shall meet in their respective states, and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same state with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice-President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President, and of all persons voted for as Vice-President, and of the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of the government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate;—The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted;—The person having the greatest number

*Amendment 10*  
*Powers retained by the states*  
*and the people*

Powers not given to the United States by the Constitution, or powers denied to the federal government by the states, are given to the states and/or to the people themselves.

*Amendment 11*  
*Lawsuits against states*

No one can use the power of the Courts against a state unless that person lives in that state. Citizens of another country cannot use the courts to sue any of the states.

*Amendment 12*  
*Election of the President*  
*and Vice President*

The electors meet in their home states and vote for the President and the Vice President using a ballot. An elector cannot vote for a President and a Vice President if both are from the same state as the elector. On the ballots, the electors must clearly mark their choice for President and Vice President. Then, the electors make a list of all the candidates who were voted for as President and Vice President, including how many votes each candidate got.

The electors then sign and approve each list, seal it and send it to the United States Congress in Washington, D.C., to the attention of the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate opens it in front of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and counts all the votes. The person who has a majority of electoral votes will be the President of the United States.

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of votes for President, shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President, the votes shall be taken by states, the representation from each state having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the states, and a majority of all the states shall be necessary to a choice. And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them, before the fourth day of March next following, then the Vice-President shall act as President, as in the case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President. The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice-President, shall be the Vice-President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed, and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list, the Senate shall choose the Vice-President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States.

*Amendment XIII  
(December 6, 1865)*

SECTION 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the

If no candidate gets a majority of electoral votes, then the House of Representatives picks the President by casting their vote for one of the top three presidential candidates who got the most electoral votes. The delegation (all the representatives from a state) of each state will have only one vote. A quorum (the least amount of people needed to make a decision) will be at least one member from two-thirds of the states voting. A majority (fifty percent plus one) of all the states will be required to make this decision. If the representatives fool around and do not make a decision before March 4 of the next year, then the Vice President becomes the President, just like if the President was to die, or be unable to serve. (The Twentieth Amendment added a little more about this.)

The person with the majority of electoral votes for Vice President will be the Vice President. If no candidate gets a majority of electoral votes, then the Senate picks the Vice President by ballot from the two Vice Presidential candidates who have the most electoral votes. At least two-thirds of the senators are needed to make this decision; and a majority (fifty percent plus one) of the Senate will be required to make the final choice. The constitutional guidelines for the President are the same for the Vice President.

*Amendment 13  
Abolishment of Slavery*

SECTION 1. Slavery no longer exists in the United States, or in any of the places the United States controls. No one is forced to work for anyone else for no pay, except

United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

SECTION 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

*Amendment XIV  
(July 9, 1868)*



SECTION 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

SECTION 2. Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the Executive and Judicial officers of a State, or the members of the Legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty one years of age in such State.

as punishment for a crime that the criminal has been convicted of by a court of law.

SECTION 2. Congress has the power to enforce this Amendment with laws.

*Amendment 14  
Equal protection under  
the law for everyone*

SECTION 1. Anyone born in the United States, or given citizenship by the United States, is a citizen of the United States and citizens of the state where they live. States cannot make or enforce any laws that limit the rewards or protections of any citizen of the United States. No state can take away any citizen's life, freedom, or belongings without proper use of the law. Every person is given the same protection under the law.

SECTION 2. The number of representatives in the House of Representatives is determined by the number of people living in the states, except Native Americans who are not taxed. If a state does not let a male citizen over twenty-one years old vote freely (unless he commits a crime, or takes part in a rebellion), the number of representatives for that state will be reduced.

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SECTION 3. No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.

SECTION 4. The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations and claims shall be held illegal and void.

SECTION 5. The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

*Amendment XV  
(February 3, 1868)*

SECTION 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

SECTION 3. No one can be a senator, representative, elector or officer of the United States—or United States military officer, or member of a state legislature, or a governor, or a judge of any state—if they took an oath to support the Constitution and then took part in a rebellion (a fight) against the United States, or gave aid and comfort to the enemies of the United States. But Congress can change this with a two-thirds vote.

SECTION 4. Any money the United States owes for paying pensions, or for paying for help to stop a revolt, can not be questioned. Neither the United States nor any state can pay any money to anyone for help in rebelling against the United States, and no state or the United States can pay for a lost or freed slave—in fact all such bills, obligations and claims are not legal.

SECTION 5. Congress has the power to enforce this Amendment by law.

*Amendment 15  
Voting rights*

SECTION 1. The United States, or any state, cannot deny anyone the right to vote based on their race, the color of their skin, or the fact that they were once a slave.

SECTION 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

*Amendment XVI  
(February 3, 1913)*

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

*Amendment XVII  
(February 3, 1868)*

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, elected by the people thereof, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote. The electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State legislatures.

When vacancies happen in the representation of any State in the Senate, the executive authority of each State shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies: *Provided*, That the legislature of any State may empower the executive thereof to make temporary appointments until the people fill the vacancies by election as the legislature may direct.

This AMENDMENT shall not be so construed as to affect the election or term of any Senator chosen before it becomes valid as part of the Constitution.

SECTION 2. Congress has the power to enforce this Amendment by law.

*Amendment 16  
Congress' power to tax*

Congress has the power to place and collect taxes on citizens' incomes (income taxes) without regard to the states, or without counting people.

*Amendment 17  
Direct election of U.S. Senators*

The Senate of the United States is made up of two senators from each state, elected by the people in that state every six years. Each senator has one vote. The electors in each state must have the same qualifications as electors of the biggest house of the state legislature.

If a senator dies or leaves office, the governor of that state calls for an election to elect a new senator. The state legislature can let the governor appoint somebody to be the "temporary" senator until that election is held.

This Amendment will not change the election or term of any senators until it becomes a valid part of the Constitution.

**Fast Fact**

On September 17, 1787, the Continental Congress approved the Constitution.





*Amendment XVIII*  
*(January 16, 1919)*

SECTION 1. After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.

SECTION 2. The Congress and the several States shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

SECTION 3. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an AMENDMENT to the Constitution by the legislatures of the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

*Amendment XIX*  
*(August 18, 1920)*

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

*Amendment XX*  
*(January 23, 1933)*

SECTION 1. The terms of the President and Vice President shall end at noon on the 20th day of January, and the terms of Senators and Representatives at noon on

*Amendment 18*  
*Prohibition of alcohol*

SECTION 1. One year after this Amendment is official, nobody can make, sell, or move beer, wine, or liquor anywhere in the United States—or anywhere under the control of the United States.

(This Amendment was later repealed.)

SECTION 2. Congress and the states have the power to enforce this Amendment by law.

SECTION 3. This Amendment will not work unless it is approved and added to the Constitution by the state legislatures, like the Constitution says, in seven years from the day it is given to the states by Congress.

*Amendment 19*  
*Women get the right to vote*

Women have the right to vote. The right to vote cannot be denied because of someone's sex.

Congress can enforce this Amendment by law.

*Amendment 20*  
*Terms of the President,  
Vice President and Congress*

SECTION 1. Terms of the President and the Vice President end at noon on January 20. Terms of senators and representatives will begin and end at noon on

the 3rd day of January, of the years in which such terms would have ended if this article had not been ratified; and the terms of their successors shall then begin.

**SECTION 2.** The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall begin at noon on the 3rd day of January, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.

**SECTION 3.** If, at the time fixed for the beginning of the term of the President, the President elect shall have died, the Vice President elect shall become President. If a President shall not have been chosen before the time fixed for the beginning of his term, or if the President elect shall have failed to qualify, then the Vice President elect shall act as President until a President shall have qualified; and the Congress may by law provide for the case wherein neither a President elect nor a Vice President elect shall have qualified, declaring who shall then act as President, or the manner in which one who is to act shall be selected, and such person shall act accordingly until a President or Vice President shall have qualified.

**SECTION 4.** The Congress may by law provide for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the House of Representatives may choose a President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them, and for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the Senate may choose a Vice President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them.

**SECTION 5.** Sections 1 and 2 shall take effect on the 15th day of October following the ratification of this article.

January 3. Terms of the new President and Vice President will begin at noon on January 20. Terms of new senators and representatives will begin at noon on January 3.

**SECTION 2.** Congress must meet at least once every year, starting on January 3, unless they pass a law to pick another day.

**SECTION 3.** If the President-Elect dies after the election and before noon on January 20, the Vice President-Elect becomes President. If, for some reason, a President is not chosen before January 20, or if the President-Elect does not meet the rules laid out in the Constitution, then the Vice President-Elect will act as President until someone is chosen as President. If neither the President-Elect nor the Vice President-Elect meets the rules laid out in the Constitution, the Congress can decide, by law, who will act as President, and how a President should then be picked. That person will act as President until the constitutional rules can be followed.

**SECTION 4.** If the representatives ever have to choose a President, or the senators ever have to choose a Vice President, and that person dies before they take office, the Congress can make a law to deal with that.

**SECTION 5.** Section 1 and 2 will take effect on October 15 after this Amendment becomes part of the Constitution.

**SECTION 6.** This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an AMENDMENT to the Constitution by the legislatures of three fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission.

*Amendment XXI  
(December 5, 1933)*

**SECTION 1.** The eighteenth article of AMENDMENT to the Constitution of the United States is hereby repealed.

**SECTION 2.** The transportation or importation into any State, Territory, or possession of the United States for delivery or use therein of intoxicating liquors, in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby prohibited.

**SECTION 3.** This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an AMENDMENT to the Constitution by conventions in the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

*Amendment XXII  
(February 27, 1951)*

**SECTION 1.** No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice, and no person who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected President shall be elected to the office of President more than once. But this Article shall not apply to any person holding the office of President when this Article was proposed by the Congress, and shall not prevent any person who may be holding the office of President, or acting as President, during

**SECTION 6.** This Amendment will not work unless it is approved and added to the Constitution by the state legislatures, like the Constitution says, seven years from the day after it is given to the states by Congress.

*Amendment 21  
Repeal of the 18th Amendment*

**SECTION 1.** The eighteenth Amendment is repealed (thrown out).

**SECTION 2.** States, territories, or other areas under the control of the United States can still pass laws making it illegal to make, sell, move, or drink beer, wine, or liquor.

**SECTION 3.** This Amendment will not work unless it is approved and added to the Constitution by the state legislatures, like the Constitution says, seven years from the day after it is given to the states by Congress.

*Amendment 22  
Limit of Presidential terms*

**SECTION 1.** Nobody can be elected President more than twice. Nobody who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of someone else's term, can be elected more than once. This Amendment does not affect the President now, and it does not affect anyone who may act as President until this Amendment is officially approved and added to the Constitution.

the term within which this Article becomes operative from holding the office of President or acting as President during the remainder of such term.

SECTION 2. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an AMENDMENT to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission to the States by the Congress.

*Amendment XXIII  
(March 29, 1961)*

SECTION 1. The District constituting the seat of Government of the United States shall appoint in such manner as the Congress may direct:

A number of electors of President and Vice President equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress to which the District would be entitled if it were a State, but in no event more than the least populous State; they shall be in addition to those appointed by the States, but they shall be considered, for the purposes of the election of President and Vice President, to be electors appointed by a State; and they shall meet in the District and perform such duties as provided by the twelfth article of AMENDMENT.

SECTION 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

*Amendment XXIV  
(January 23, 1964)*

SECTION 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or

SECTION 2. This Amendment will not work unless it is approved and added to the Constitution by the state legislatures, like the Constitution says, seven years from the day after it is given to the states by Congress.

*Amendment 23  
Washington, D.C. electors  
for President*

SECTION 1. The place where the seat of government is located (now it is Washington, the District of Columbia) can pick electors like this:

The number of electors is figured as if the District of Columbia was a state, and the number would equal the number of senators and representatives of the smallest state. These electors would be in addition to the electors chosen by the states. For the election of the President and Vice President, electors act like they are from a state. They meet in the District of Columbia and follow the rules of the Twelfth Amendment.

SECTION 2. Congress has the power to enforce this Amendment by law.

*Amendment 24  
Elimination of the poll tax*

SECTION 1. No state can make people pay a tax in order to vote in any election for

other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.

SECTION 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

*Amendment XXV  
(February 10, 1967)*

SECTION 1. In case of the removal of the President from office or of his death or resignation, the Vice President shall become President.

SECTION 2. Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the Vice President, the President shall nominate a Vice President who shall take office upon confirmation by a majority vote of both Houses of Congress.

SECTION 3. Whenever the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, and until he transmits to them a written declaration to the contrary, such powers and duties shall be discharged by the Vice President as Acting President.

SECTION 4. Whenever the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive departments or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written

President, Vice President, senator or representative.

SECTION 2. Congress has the power to enforce this Amendment by law.

*Amendment 25  
Succession of office*

SECTION 1. If the President dies, leaves office, or gets kicked out (impeached), the Vice President becomes the President.

SECTION 2. If for some reason there is not a Vice President, the President picks one, and that person becomes the Vice President after a majority of senators and representatives approve that person.

SECTION 3. If the President writes to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives and tells him or her they believe the President can no longer do the job—the Vice President becomes the Acting President. The President who gave up the office has to write to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House again to let them know when he or she thinks they can do the job again.

SECTION 4. If the Vice President and a majority of the Cabinet officers write to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House to tell them the President cannot do the job, the Vice President immediately begins acting as President.

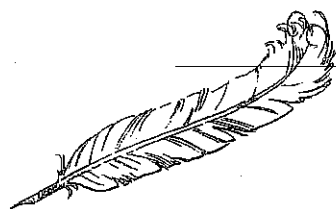
declaration that the President is unable to discharge the power and duties of his office, the Vice President shall immediately assume the powers and duties of the office as Acting President.

Thereafter, when the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that no inability exists, he shall resume the powers and duties of his office unless the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive department or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit within four days to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office. Thereupon Congress shall decide the issue, assembling within forty-eight hours for that purpose if not in session. If the Congress, within twenty-one days after receipt of the latter written declaration, or, if Congress is not in session, within twenty-one days after Congress is required to assemble, determines by two-thirds vote of both Houses that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall continue to discharge the same as Acting President; otherwise, the President shall resume the powers and duties of his office.

*Amendment XXVI  
(July 1, 1971)*

SECTION 1. The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age.

When the original President writes to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House to tell them he or she can now do the job again, the President immediately gets back the powers as President—unless within four days, the Vice President and a majority of the Cabinet officers write the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House and tells them they don't think the President is ready to resume his or her duties. If all that happens, Congress will meet within forty-eight hours to decide the issue. Congress must act within twenty-one days of receiving the letter. If senators and representatives decide by a two-thirds vote that the original President cannot do the job, the Vice President will continue to act as President. Otherwise, the President gets the job back.



*Amendment 26  
Right of 18-year-old citizens  
to vote*

SECTION 1. Citizens who are eighteen years old can now vote. The United States, or any state, cannot take away anyone's right to vote based on age.

SECTION 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

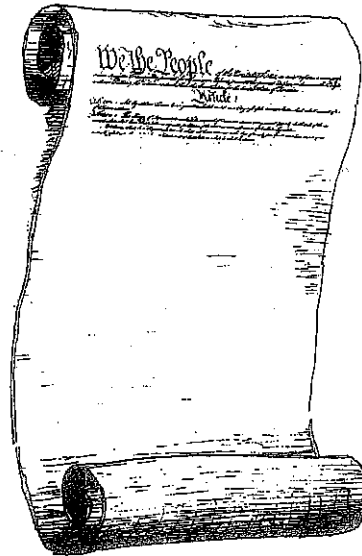
*Amendment XXVII  
(May 18, 1992)*

(Article the Second . . . ) No law, varying the compensation for the services of the Senators and Representatives, shall take effect, until an election of Representatives shall have intervened.

SECTION 2. Congress has the power to enforce this Amendment by law.

*Amendment 27  
Determination of Congressional  
pay raises*

Congress cannot get a raise until an election is held after they passed the law giving themselves a raise.



**Fast Fact**

James Madison was known as the "Father of our Constitution." He had more to do with creating it than anybody else. He was later elected and served as the fourth President of the United States from 1809-1817.



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