

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America.

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. --That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. . . .

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Butt, Spinnet,  
Lynch, Hall,  
Geo. Walton.

John Hancock  
Joseph Hewes  
John Penn

John Hancock

Samuel Chase  
10th Dec  
The Hon  
Cyril Courtwright

Not Morris  
Benjamin Rush  
Ben Franklin

John Norton  
George  
John Smith

John Jay  
John Jay  
Lewis Morris

Jeriah Bartlett  
W. Whipple  
Lans Adams

John Adams  
Not Great Paine  
George Fox

Edward Rutledge

The Wagoner  
Thomas Lynch  
Arthur Middleton

George Wythe  
Richard Henry Lee  
Th Jefferson  
Wm Harrison  
The Wilson  
James Lightfoot  
Custer Braxton

James Wilson  
G. W. P  
Casper Wistar  
John Adams  
Thomson

Rich. Stockton  
John Dickinson  
John Jay  
John Jay  
Abra Clark

Ste. Hopkins  
William Ellery  
Roger Sherman  
John Huntington  
W. W. Livingston  
Oliver Wolcott  
Matthew Thornton



# Original Constitution of the United States

## PREAMBLE

**We the People** of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

## Article. I.

### Section 1.

All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

### Section. 2.

Clause 1: The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

Clause 2: No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years, and been seven Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Clause 3: Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, . . .

In Convention, Monday,  
September 17th, 1787

# America the Beautiful

(lyrics by Katherine Lee Bates, July 4, 1895;  
music composed by Samuel A. Ward)

**O beautiful** for spacious skies,  
For amber waves of grain,  
For purple mountain majesties  
Above the fruited plain!

America! America!  
God shed His grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea!

**O beautiful** for pilgrim feet  
Whose stern impassion'd stress  
A thoroughfare for freedom beat  
Across the wilderness.

America! America!  
God mend thine ev'ry flaw,  
Confirm thy soul in self-control,  
Thy liberty in law.

**O beautiful** for heroes prov'd  
In liberating strife,  
Who more than self their country loved,  
And mercy more than life.

America! America!  
May God thy gold refine  
Till all success be nobleness,  
And ev'ry gain divine.

**O beautiful** for patriot dream  
That sees beyond the years  
Thine alabaster cities gleam  
Undimmed by human tears.

America! America!  
God shed His grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea.



## America's Bill of Rights

### 1. *[Freedom of Religion, Speech, Press, Assembly, Petition]*

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.

### 2. *[Right to Keep and Bear Arms]*

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.

### 3. *[Quartering of Soldiers]*

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.

### 4. *[Security from Unwarrantable Search and Seizure]*

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.

### 5. *[Rights of Accused in Criminal Proceedings]*

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.

### 6. *[Right to Speedy Trial, Witnesses, etc.]*

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 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.

### 7. *[Trial by Jury in Civil Cases]*

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.

### 8. *[Bails, Fines, Punishments]*

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

### 9. *[Reservation of Rights of the People]*

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

### 10. *[Powers Reserved to States or People]*

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.

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(The first Ten Amendments to the U. S. Constitution,  
adopted December 15, 1791)

Prepared by Fred Holden, Public Policy Specialist, Speaker, Educator and Author of *TOTAL Power of ONE in America: Discover What You Need to Know, Why and How to be a More Powerful Person and Citizen*, Box 1900, Arvada, CO 80001, 303-421-7619, fredholden@aol.com; 2/10/2009.