

The Bill of Rights

Additions to the Constitution of the United States of America

A Modern Language Version by G. Brent Riggs

Introduction to the Bill of Rights

Congress of the United States begun and held at the City of New-York, on Wednesday, March 4th, 1789

At the same time a number of States were meeting to adopt their Constitution, they communicated their desire that additional declarations and restrictions be added to prevent improper use and abuse of Constitutional power, ensuring that they will only be used for the good of the people it governs.

It was voted and agreed on by two-thirds of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States of America when Congress assembled, that the following Rights be proposed to the Legislatures of the States as additions (Amendments) to the Constitution of the United States. Any or all of the Amendments, upon being agreed to and sanctioned by three fourths of the State Legislatures, will for all intents and purposes become part of the United States Constitution, in other words...

When agreed to by the Legislatures of the States in accordance with Article Five of the original Constitution, these proposed Articles will become additions to the Constitution of the United States.

Citizen Right 1

Congress is not allowed to make any laws that will establish an official State religion, or in any way interfere with the right of individuals to practice religion freely. Nor will Congress create any laws that will deny the People freedom of speech; deny the right to publish opinion, news or information; deny the right to assemble together in peaceful groups, or deny the right to request compensation or amends from the Government if the Government has committed violations or injustice against them.

Citizen Right 2

A lawfully governed Army, which is necessary to secure freedom, and the right of the People to purchase and use fire arms, is a right that cannot be denied or diminished.

Citizen Right 3

No military personnel during Peace time will be fed and housed in private homes without the permission of the Home Owner. This shall not happen during War time unless appropriate Laws have been passed and are followed.

Citizen Right 4

The People have a right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures of their houses, documents, personal belongings and bodies. No Search or Seizure Warrant shall be issued without a sound reason based on oath or official confirmation which specifically describes the location to be searched, and exactly the persons or items to be seized.

Citizen Right 5

A person cannot be detained and put on trial for a capital crime or a crime that is notoriously bad unless a formal accusation of the crime has been presented by a Grand Jury, except when the case involves the Armed Forces or National Guard during actual war-time service or public danger. A person cannot be put on trial twice for the same crime, also known as "double jeopardy"; nor can a person be forced to testify or be a witness against one's self. Individuals may not have life, freedom or property taken away from them by the Government unless it is in compliance with established Law; nor can their private property be taken from them for public use without appropriate compensation.

Citizen Right 6

A person accused of a crime has the right to a speedy, public trial where guilt will be decided by an impartial group of fellow Citizens petitioned by the State for jury duty. The trial must take place in the same previously and legally established district in which the crime was committed. The Accused must be told exactly what they are being prosecuted for and why they have been accused. The Accused must have the opportunity to hear the testimony of the witnesses against them, and have the opportunity to call, and coerce if necessary, witnesses to testify on their behalf. The Accused also has a right to have an Attorney for legal defense.

Citizen Right 7

In Lawsuits where the amount of money in question exceeds twenty dollars, the Accused will have the right to choose a Trial by Jury. Once the facts of the Lawsuit are decided on by a Jury, those facts cannot be tried again in any Court of the United States, unless it is in keeping with the rules of the common law.

Citizen Right 8

A sum of money cannot be required by the Government for a promise to appear in Court (bail) that is not proportionate to the seriousness of the crime, nor can excessive financial penalties be imposed. Cruel and unusual punishment may not be imposed by the Government.

Citizen Right 9

The numbered list of certain rights in the Constitution shall not be defined and used as a reason to deny or denounce the other rights that people have.

Citizen Right 10

Governing power that is not specifically assigned to the United States as a country by the Constitution, or not specifically denied as a State power by the Constitution, are to be reserved for the State level, or to the People.