

LA CONSTITUTION DES ETATS-UNIS - LES AMENDEMENTS

The American constitution was created

in 1776 and ratified in 1788, it was amended 27 times in accordance with the constitution, article IV.

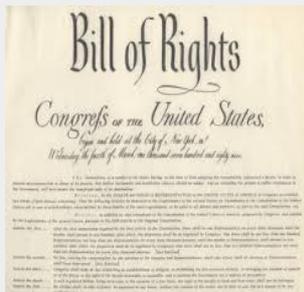
Bill of Rights

Bill of Rights is a set of laws which constituted basic legal protection for individual.

These 10 amendments have been established by James Madison.

James Madison (1751-1836)

4th President of the United States. He is considered as "the father of the constitution" and he is the author of the United States Bill of Rights.



The constitution provides an opportunity to make amendments, it becomes part of the constitution only after ratification by three-fourths of the states, the deadline is of 7 years. However an amendment remains pending and the states may continue to consider it regardless of its age. For instance, a child labor amendment (1924) prohibiting the labor of under - 18s has not yet been ratified.

The Bill of Rights forms a basic legal protection : freedom of speech and expression, the right to bear arms, to be protected against abuses of the police or justice, to be judged impartially.

Moreover many amendments form the electoral process, amendments 12,20,22,25,27 constitute elections of the president and the vice-president, amendments 14,17 are for senators and amendments 15,19,23,24,26 form electoral rights of citizens.

After the defeat of the confederation of southern states, the union with the president Abraham Lincoln proposed and ratified in 1865 Amendment 13 which put an end to slavery.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the USA knew a proliferation of saloons, gambling and prostitution. Consequently Amendment 18 instituted prohibition of all alcoholic drinks, however it was repealed by amendment 21 in 1933.

List of amendments not listed above :

Amendment 1 : It protects freedom of speech, of the press and the right to assemble.

Amendment 2 : It gives "the right of the people to keep and bear arms" (necessary for the defense of the state).

Amendment 3 : It forbids quartering soldiers in private homes without the owner's consent.

Amendment 4 : protects people against unreasonable searches and seizures, it requires warrants.

Amendment 5 : it forbids deprivation of life, liberty and property without process of law

Amendment 6 : it guarantees the accused a speedy public trial by an impartial jury of peers and the rights to be informed of the accusation

Amendment 7 : guarantees jury trials in civil cases involving anything valued at over \$20.

Amendment 8 : prohibits excessive bail or fines or cruel and unusual punishment.

Amendment 9 : provides that the enumeration of rights in the constitution is not comprehensive.

Amendment 10 : all powers not delegated to the United States are reserved to the states or the people.

Amendment 11 : restricts judicial powers and forbids using any state.