

Some Proposed Amendments

The Constitution is a living and evolving document. One of the ways that the Constitution is changed is through the [amendment process](#). It can be an arduous process, requiring agreement by many different segments of society and the government, and [it does not always work out](#). But it is the only way to make a permanent change to the Constitution. Changes in interpretation are common as time progresses, but only by having actual text added can a change be called a part of the Constitution.

In every session of Congress, hundreds of constitutional amendments are proposed. Almost never do any of them become actual Amendments. In fact, almost never do any of them even get out of committee.

According to [a study by C-SPAN](#), this is a count of the number of amendments proposed in each of the sessions of Congress in the 1990's:

- 106th (1999 only): 60
- 105th (1997-98): 103
- 104th (1995-96): 158
- 103rd (1993-94): 156
- 102nd (1991-92): 165
- 101st (1989-90): 214

It is interesting to see the types of things our legislators want to do the Constitution. Proposed amendments are a reflection of the mood of the nation, or of a subset of the population.

These lists are simple bullets, not detailed examinations of the proposed amendments, the bills that carried them, or the process they went through. If a further examination is desired, a search of the [Thomas database](#) can be done.

Please note that some proposed amendments are proposed over and over again in different sessions of Congress. For the sake of brevity, I have used the 102nd Congress as a "baseline" and each subsequent Congress has only new ideas for amendments listed. Also note that just because a proposed amendment is not listed in prior sessions does not mean it was not proposed in prior sessions.

109th Congress (2005-2006)

- To ensure reproductive rights of women
- To force the Congress and President to agree to a balanced budget, with overspending allowed only in the case of a three-fifths vote of Congress
- To ensure that all children who are citizens have a right to a "free and adequate education"
- To specifically permit prayer at school meetings and ceremonies
- To allow non-natural born citizens to become President if they have been a citizen for 20 years
- To specifically allow Congress to regulate the amount of personal funds a candidate to public office can expend in a campaign
- To ensure that apportionment of Representatives be set by counting only citizens
- To make the filibuster in the Senate a part of the Constitution
- To provide for continuity of government in case of a catastrophic event
- The "Every Vote Counts" Amendment - providing for direct election of the President and Vice President, abolishing the [Electoral College](#)
- To clarify eminent domain, specifically that no takings can be transferred to a private person except for transportation projects
- Providing a right to work, for equal pay for equal work, the right to organize, and the right to favorable work conditions
- To allow the President to reduce any Congressional appropriation, or to disapprove of same (akin to a line-item veto)

108th Congress (2003-2004)

- To lower the age restriction on Representatives and Senators from 30 and 25 respectively to 21
- To ensure that citizens of U.S. territories and commonwealths can vote in presidential elections
- To guarantee the right to use the word "God" in the [Pledge of Allegiance](#) and the national motto
- To restrict marriage in all states to be between a man and a woman
- To remove any protection any court may find for child pornography
- To allow Congress to pass laws for emergency replenishment of its membership should more than a quarter of either house be killed
- To place Presidential nominees immediately into position, providing the Senate with 120 days to reject the nominee before the appointment is automatically permanent

107th Congress (2001-2002)

- Calling for the repeal of the [8th Amendment](#) and its replacement with wording prohibiting incarceration for minor traffic offenses
- To specify that progressive income taxes must be used
- To specify a right to "equal high quality" health care
- To limit pardons granted between October 1 and January 21 of any presidential election year
- To require a balanced budget without use of Social Security Trust Fund monies
- To allow for any person who has been a citizen of the United States for twenty years or more to be eligible for the Presidency
- To force the members of Congress and the President to forfeit their salary, on a per diem basis, for every day past the end of the fiscal year that a budget for that year remains unpassed

106th Congress (1999-2000)

- To provide a new method for proposing amendments to the Constitution, where two-thirds of all state legislatures could start the process
- To allow Congress to enact campaign spending limits on federal elections
- To allow Congress to enact campaign spending limits on state elections
- To declare that life begins at conception and that the [5th](#) and [14th](#) amendments apply to unborn children
- To prohibit courts from instructing any state or lower government to levy or raise taxes

105th Congress (1997-1998)

- To force a national referendum for any deficit spending
- To provide for the reconfirmation of federal judges every 12 years
- To prohibit the early release of convicted criminals
- To establish the right to a home
- To define the legal effect of international treaties
- To clarify that the Constitution neither prohibits nor requires school prayer
- To establish judicial terms of office

104th Congress (1995-1996)

- To clarify the meaning of [the 2nd Amendment](#)
- To provide for the reconfirmation of federal judges every 6 years
- To force a two-thirds vote for any bill that raises taxes
- To repeal [the 16th Amendment](#) and specifically prohibit an income tax
- To provide for removal of any officer of the U.S. convicted of a felony
- To permit the States to set term limits for their Representatives and Senators

103rd Congress (1993-1994)

- To allow a Presidential pardon of an individual only after said individual has been tried and convicted of a crime
- To allow Congress to pass legislation to allow the Supreme Court to remove federal judges from office
- To provide for the reconfirmation of federal judges every 10 years
- To provide for the recall of Representatives and Senators
- To remove automatic citizenship of children born in the U.S. to non-resident parents
- To enable or repeal laws by popular vote
- To define a process to allow amendments to the Constitution be proposed by a popular ("grass-roots") effort
- To force a three-fifths vote for any bill that raises taxes
- To prohibit retroactive taxation
- To provide for run-off Presidential elections if no one candidate receives more than 50% of the vote
- To prohibit abortion
- To bar imposition on the States of unfunded federal mandates

102nd Congress (1991-1992)

- To disallow the desecration of the U.S. Flag
- To allow a line-item veto in appropriations bills
- To expand the term of Representatives to four years
- To force a balanced budget
- To prohibit involuntary busing of students
- To make English the official language of the United States
- To set term limits on Representatives and Senators
- To repeal [the 22nd Amendment](#) (removing Presidential term limits)
- To guarantee a right to employment opportunity for all citizens
- To grant protections to unborn children
- To provide for "moments of silence" in public schools
- To allow Congress to regulate expenditures for and contributions to political campaigns
- To provide for the rights of crime victims
- To provide for access to medical care for all citizens
- To repeal [the 2nd Amendment](#) (right to bear arms)
- To prohibit the death penalty
- To protect the environment
- To repeal [the 26th Amendment](#) (granting the vote to 18-year olds) and granting the right to vote to 16-year olds
- To provide equal rights to men and women