



# Government Structures, Powers, Functions, and Interactions

Instructional Slides



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF  
**EDUCATION**

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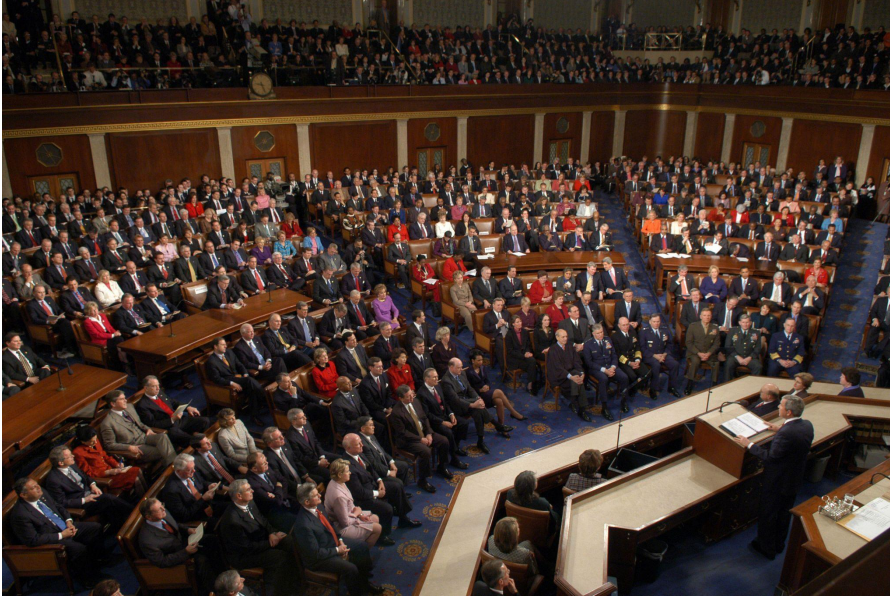
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# Topic 1: The U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights



**Framing Question:** How does the Constitution protect liberty?



# Topic 1: The U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights



This political cartoon, published by the *Massachusetts Centinel*, shows the states that ratified the Constitution as "Federal Pillars." On the right side, North Carolina is being tipped into place, while the thirteenth pillar, Rhode Island, is shown crumbling. The caption reads, "The foundation good — it may yet be SAVED."



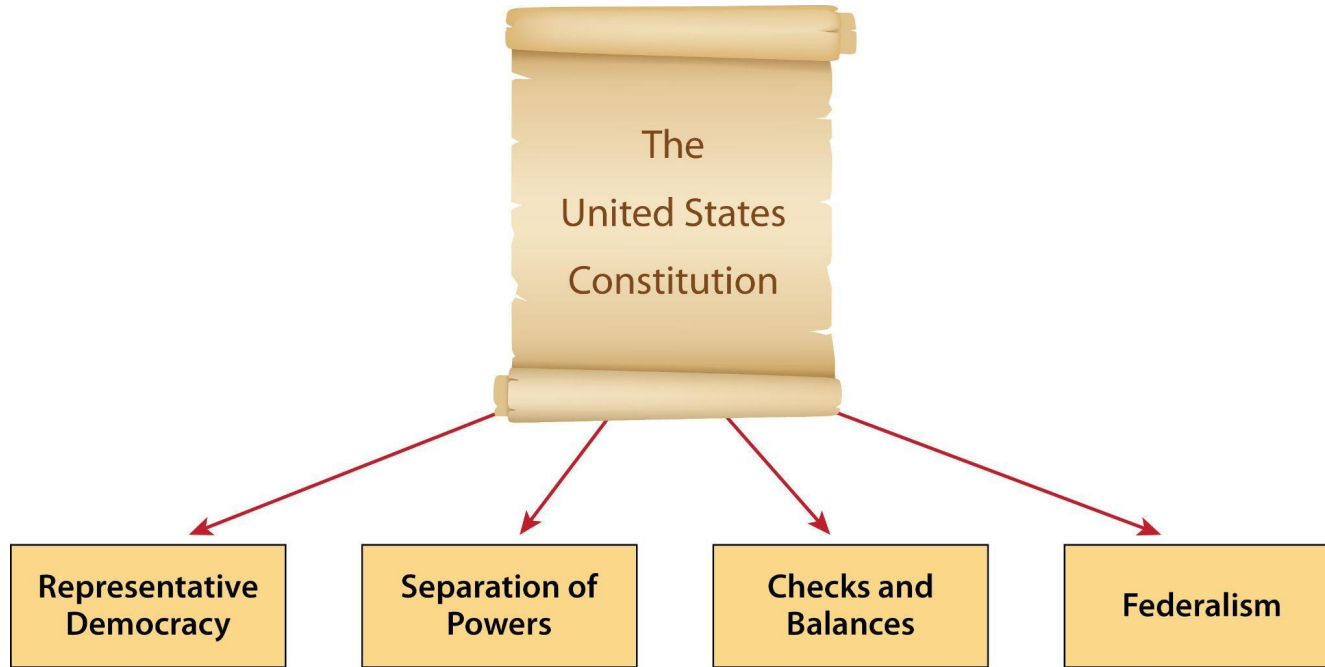
# Topic 1: The U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights



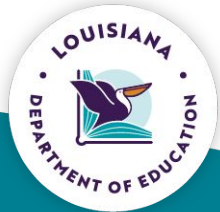
Delegates at the Constitutional Convention created a Committee of Style to assemble the final document. This included making minor adjustments, like changing the list of the states in the preamble to “We the People of the United States.”



# Topic 1: The U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights



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Article I	Article II	Article III
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establishes the legislative branch, called Congress</li><li>• Specifies combined and distinct powers of the House of Representatives and the Senate</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establishes the executive branch</li><li>• Outlines the powers and responsibilities of the president, including signing and enforcing laws passed by Congress</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establishes the judicial branch</li><li>• Makes the Supreme Court the highest court in the land</li></ul>



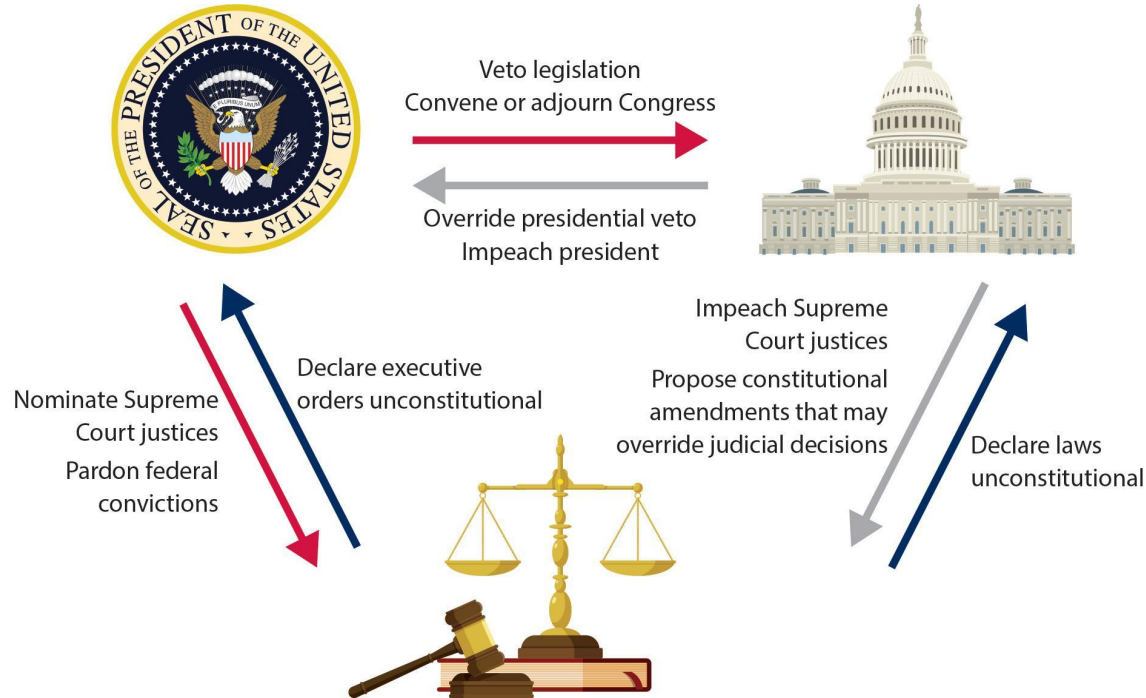


# Topic 1: The U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights

Article IV	Article V	Article VI	Article VII
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Defines the relationship between the states, their laws, and equal treatment of citizens</li><li>• Explains how new states are added to the Union</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describes the amendment process, or how changes are made to the Constitution</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discusses debts of the old and new U.S. governments</li><li>• Makes the Constitution the highest law in the land</li><li>• Requires officials to swear an oath of office</li><li>• Bans religious tests</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explains the process for adopting the Constitution</li></ul>



# Topic 1: The U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights



Each of the three branches of the federal government has the power to check the actions of the other two.

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The U.S. Bill of Rights	
<b>First Amendment</b> Freedoms of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition	<b>Second Amendment</b> Right to bear arms
<b>Third Amendment</b> Limitations on quartering (housing) troops in homes	<b>Fourth Amendment</b> Protection against unreasonable search or seizure of people or property
<b>Fifth Amendment</b> Various rights of due process, including the freedom to refuse to testify against yourself	<b>Sixth Amendment</b> Various rights of the accused in criminal cases, including the rights to a fair and speedy trial, to call and question witnesses, and to have an attorney
<b>Seventh Amendment</b> Right to a jury trial for civil cases	<b>Eighth Amendment</b> Protection against unreasonably high bail and cruel and unusual punishment
<b>Ninth Amendment</b> Protection of rights not listed in the Constitution	<b>Tenth Amendment</b> Assigns powers not granted to the federal government to the states or the people

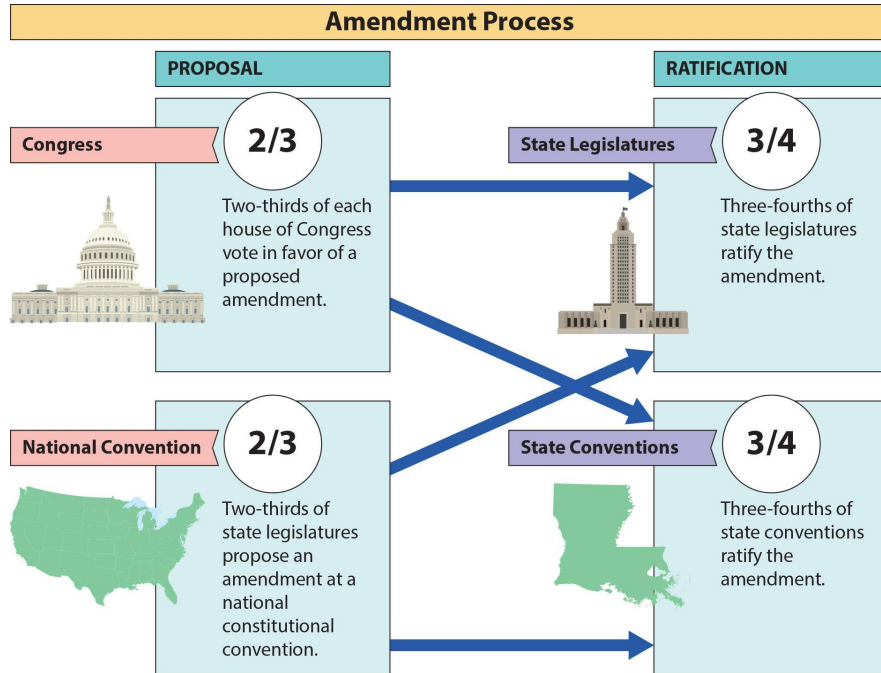
It took the promise of a bill of rights for many states, including Massachusetts, to ratify the Constitution.



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# Topic 1: The U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights



There are two ways to propose and ratify a constitutional amendment.



## Subject Matter Expert

Dr. Christian S. Davis, James Madison University

## Illustration and Photo Credits

3\_The Federal Pillars, a political cartoon from the 'Massachusetts Centinel' shows the New York column is in place, and the North Carolina column is being put into position; to the right is the crumbling Rhode Island column next to the notation, 'The foundation good -it may yet be SAVED.' Rhode Island did not ratify the Federal Constitution until May 18, 1790, then only with conditions and under threat of a trade embargo by the other states/Everett Collection / Bridgeman Images: 4

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Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) (colour litho), Peale, Rembrandt (1778–1860) / Private Collection / Peter Newark American Pictures / Bridgeman Images.: 12

