



Constitutional Amendments

The Bill of Rights

- ◆ The promise of a bill of rights was key to ratification of the Constitution.
- ◆ Based on the Virginia Declaration of Rights (Mason) and the Declaration of Independence (Jefferson), written by James Madison and submitted to Congress.
- ◆ 12 amendments were approved by Congress and submitted to the states. (1789)
- ◆ 10 amendments were ratified by the states and became known as the Bill of Rights.

Civil Liberties

- ◆ The first four amendments are rooted in the issues and events which brought about the American Revolution.
 - Basic freedoms and rights of citizens
 - Specific complaints against British rule



Colonial protest against the Stamp Act
[The Constitution Center]

First Amendment Freedoms

◆ Religion

- No official state religion
- Guarantees free exercise of religion

◆ Speech and Press

- Free expression of ideas
- Freedom to criticize the government
- Does not include:
 - ◆ Libel—Press
 - John Peter Zenger
 - ◆ Slander--Speech
 - ◆ Expression that endangers public safety

◆ Assembly

- Freedom to hold peaceful and legal meetings to discuss issues and conduct business
- Freedom to associate in groups--political parties

◆ Petition

- Send written complaints to government officials
- Circulate petitions of mass support for complaints against the government.

Personal Freedoms

◆ Second Amendment

- Right to “keep and bear arms”—states needed to keep their militias for emergencies.

◆ Third Amendment

- Citizens cannot be forced to house soldiers.

◆ Fourth Amendment

- Prohibits “unreasonable searches and seizures”
- Without “probable cause,” authorities must have a search warrant

Rights of the Accused

◆ Fifth Amendment

- Guarantees due process of law
- Indictment required before a criminal trial
- Protection from testifying against oneself
- No double jeopardy
- Property protected under due process
 - ◆ Eminent domain



Right to a Fair Trial

◆ Sixth Amendment

In criminal cases:

- Quick public trial
- Impartial jury
- Informed of charges
- Face witnesses
- Subpoena witnesses
- Right to an attorney

◆ Seventh Amendment

In civil cases:

- Trial by jury in cases valued over \$20.

◆ Eighth Amendment

- No excessive bail or fines
- No cruel and unusual punishment

Reserved Powers

Rights of Citizens

- ◆ Ninth Amendment
 - The rights listed in the Constitution are not the only rights to which citizens are entitled
 - Allows courts and Congress to recognize other basic rights of citizens—such as education or privacy

Rights of the States

- ◆ Tenth Amendment
 - Federalism--maintains balance of power between the federal and state governments
 - Under the Constitution, the states and the people have powers not specifically:
 - ◆ Given to the federal government, or
 - ◆ Denied to the states

After the Bill of Rights

The Constitution has been amended 17 times since the Bill of Rights was ratified by the states in 1791. These amendments can be classified in three main categories:

- ◆ Election Procedures and Requirements of Office
- ◆ Social and Economic Changes
- ◆ Voting Rights

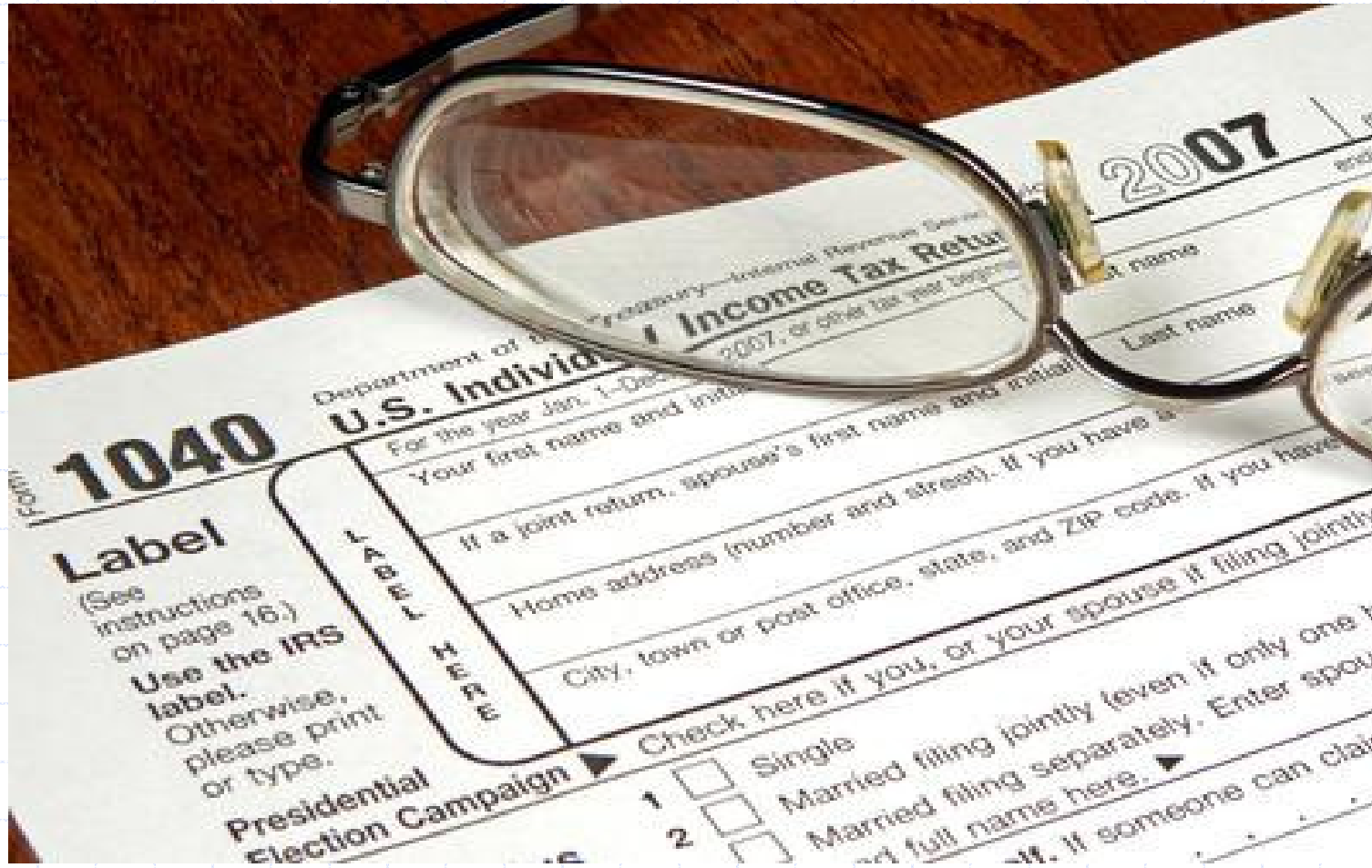
Elections & Requirements of Office



Elections & Requirements of Office

- ◆ 12th—President and Vice President elected separately by electors
- ◆ 17th—Direct election of U.S. Senators
- ◆ 20th—President and Congress take office in January 20th and 3rd, respectively
- ◆ 22nd—Sets term limits for the President
- ◆ 25th—Outlines Presidential succession
- ◆ 27th—Restricts compensation changes for Congress

Social and Economic Changes



Social and Economic Changes

- ◆ 11th—States may not be sued in federal courts by citizens of other states or countries
- ◆ 13th—Outlaws slavery
- ◆ 14th—Equal Protection—prevents states from interfering with rights of U.S. citizens, defines citizenship
- ◆ 16th—Taxes may be levied on income
- ◆ 18th—Prohibition
- ◆ 21st—Repeals Prohibition

Voting Rights



Voting Rights

- ◆ 15th—Right to vote cannot be denied because of race or previous servitude
- ◆ 19th—Universal suffrage—women have the right to vote
- ◆ 23rd—District of Columbia may vote in Presidential elections
- ◆ 24th—Outlaws poll taxes
- ◆ 26th—Extends the right to vote to 18 year-olds