

# The Bill of Rights

In 1789, Madison, then a member of the newly established U.S. House of Representatives, introduced 19 amendments to the Constitution.

On September 25, 1789, Congress adopted 12 of the amendments and sent them to the states for ratification. Ten of these amendments,

known collectively as the [Bill of Rights](#), were ratified and became part of the Constitution on December 10, 1791. The Bill of Rights

guarantees individuals certain basic protections as citizens, including freedom of speech, religion and the press; the right to bear and keep

arms; the right to peaceably assemble; protection from unreasonable search and seizure; and the right to a speedy and public trial by an

impartial jury. For his contributions to the drafting of the Constitution,

**as well as its ratification, Madison became known as “Father of the Constitution.”**

**To date, there have been thousands of proposed amendments to the Constitution. However, only 17 amendments have been ratified in addition to the Bill of Rights because the process isn’t easy—after a proposed amendment makes it through Congress, it must be ratified by three-fourths of the states. The most recent amendment to the Constitution, Article XXVII, which deals with congressional pay raises, was proposed in 1789 and ratified in 1992**



