



Outlook

Constitution Day - Thursday September 17

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Good morning everyone,

Thursday, September 17 (tomorrow) is Constitution day and educational institutions receiving federal funds are to provide a Constitution Day educational program on September 17th each year to commemorate the signing of the U.S. Constitution.

Constitution Week: A Celebration of American Democracy

Constitution Week is a week-long observance in the United States commemorates the signing of the U.S. Constitution on September 17, 1787. It's a time to reflect on the principles and ideals that have shaped the nation's democracy. Citizenship Day is also celebrated on September 17. Constitution Week is a great time to learn more about this important document and celebrate the freedoms it gave us.

On September 17, 1787 the United States Constitution was ratified and became the supreme law of the land. To celebrate the anniversary of the Constitution's ratification, I ask that you to take a moment and consider how the Constitution impacts your personal life as well as our collective lives as a national community, especially considering the political environment that we live in.

Written in 1787, ratified in 1788, and in operation since 1789, the United States Constitution is the world's longest surviving written charter of government. Its first three words — "We the People" — affirm that the government of the United States exists to serve its citizens. For over two centuries the Constitution has remained in force because its framers wisely separated and balanced governmental powers to safeguard the interests of majority rule and minority rights, of liberty and equality, and of the federal and state governments. Since 1789, the Constitution has evolved through amendments to meet the changing needs of a nation now profoundly different from the eighteenth-century world in which its creators lived.

The United States enjoys a representative form of government, shaped by three separate branches as established in the Constitution:

- Article I states that "All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives."
- Article II states that "The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America."
- Article III provides for a "judicial Power of the United States."

A system of checks and balances, which the Constitution also sets forth, limits the powers of each branch.

Article I of the Constitution created and defined the United States Congress, granting to the two houses of the legislative branch such powers as the ability to collect taxes, coin money, raise and support an army, declare war, establish post offices, create patent laws, and establish a federal judicial system. It gave to the Senate the exclusive right to provide advice and consent to the president on treaties and nominations, and the sole power to try and remove from office an impeached governmental official.

More than two centuries after its ratification, the United States Constitution remains a vital and living document, strengthened by amendments, serving as both guide and protector of U.S. citizens and their elected officials. It has survived civil war, economic depressions, assassinations, and even terrorist attacks, to remain a source of wisdom and inspiration.

The creation of the U.S. Constitution depended upon the knowledge, experience and dedication of its framers, just as its endurance depends upon the knowledge and experience of each succeeding generation of Americans. For this reason, it is important for us to learn and understand the governing principles of our nation, set forth in the Constitution.

To encourage all Americans to learn more about the Constitution, Congress in 1956 established Constitution Week, to begin each year on September 17th, the date in 1787 when delegates to the Convention signed the Constitution. In 2004, Senator Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia included key provisions in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of Fiscal Year 2005 designating September 17th of each year as Constitution Day and requiring public schools and governmental offices to provide educational programs to promote a better understanding of the Constitution.

Our nation's traditional motto, E Pluribus Unum, which means *out of many, one*, serves to remind us that although our country has over three hundred and thirty million individual citizens, we are together a single nation. While a number of cultural facets serve to help define our collective uniqueness, it is our Supreme Law, the Constitution, which has, and does, and will continue to mold us toward our "more perfect union".

Looking for some fun activities to help celebrate?

Click on the links below and share these free resources on Constitution Day.

- Read [Famous Quotes](#) about the U.S. Constitution and Democracy.
- [Crossword Puzzles!](#)
- Schoolhouse Rock's "[Constitution Preamble\(Open Link in new tab\)](#)"
- Conversation with Ben Franklin - [Student Town Hall: A Conversation with Benjamin Franklin](#)
- [Test Your Knowledge](#) about the U.S. Constitution.
- Explore ConstitutionFacts.com to find answers to the [Treasure Hunts](#).

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