

## The Bill of Rights and Me

For the past 229 years, the Bill of Rights has protected the basic freedoms of American citizens. It has upheld our nation's foundation by preserving liberty, one of the main components of a true democracy. Although the first ten amendments were written over two centuries ago, their ideas continue to leave a tangible impact on our country today. I, myself, have been a benefactor of the Bill of Rights.

I believe the most important amendment is the first amendment. It encourages citizens to advocate for their rights and become involved in their government by ensuring the freedom of speech and the press as well as the right to assemble and petition the government.

As a member of my school's anti-racism club, the first amendment has encouraged me to share stories of racial discrimination from my campus with my community. By raising awareness for this need for change, I have helped preserve the American ideals of equality and diversity.

I have also been able to exercise my first amendment rights at school board meetings by sharing my concerns regarding a hazardous local construction project and the reopening of school during the pandemic. By petitioning and speaking at these meetings, I have aided in improving school policies and I was able to further develop my passion for activism and public speaking.

Finally, the last amendment of the Bill of Rights places powers not stated within the constitution in the hands of the states and the people. As a Californian, this has helped me forge pride within my state, as the tenth amendment reinforces the independence of states within our union. California has been a leader in environmental policies, social equality, and progress. Thus, when I tell others that I am from California, I say so with a proud smile.

The Bill of Rights has greatly influenced my life by ensuring my liberties and encouraging me to exercise them. As a fellow American, I hope that all citizens continue to exercise their rights and contribute to the ongoing development of our country so that the United States can become a more perfect Union.