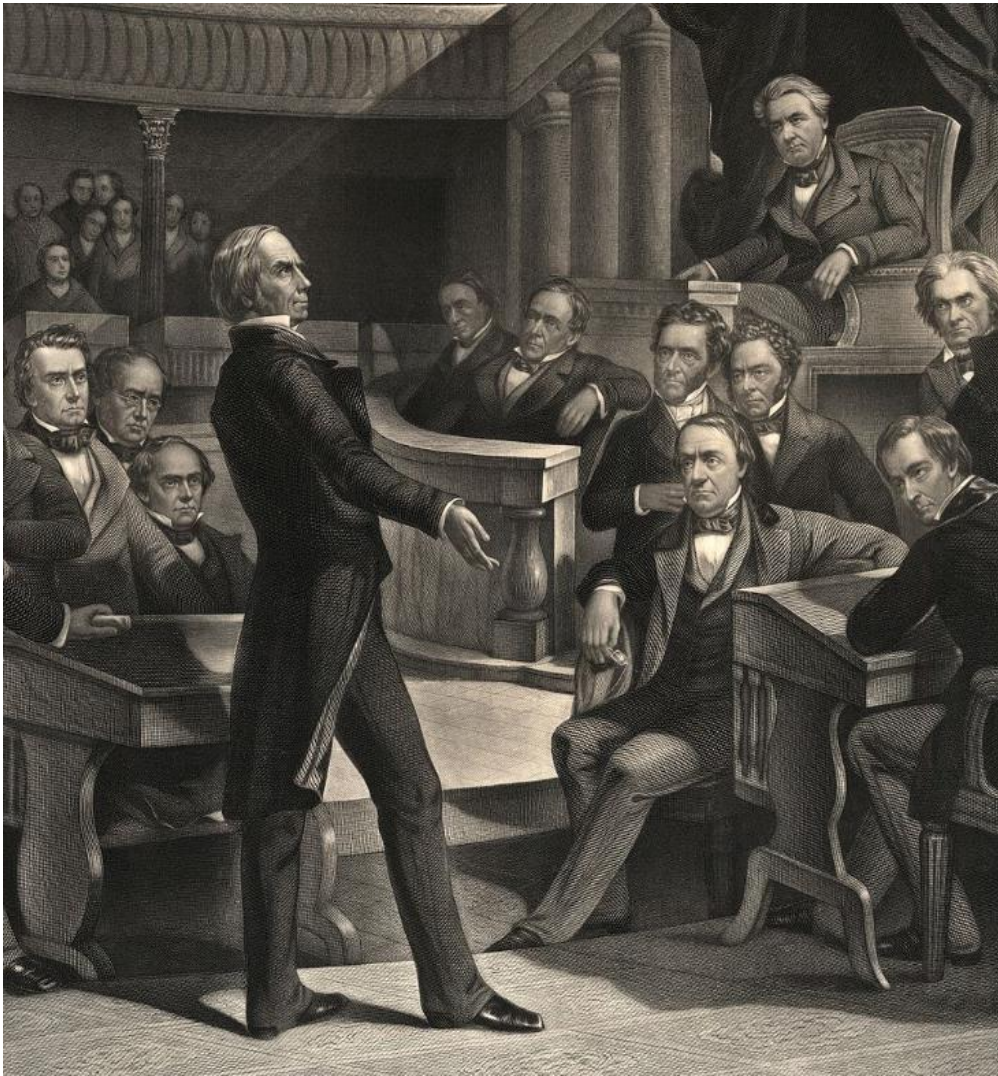


A black and white photograph of the United States Capitol building in Washington, D.C. The building is the central focus, with its iconic dome and neoclassical architecture. The foreground shows a grassy area with some trees and a path. The title "AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION" is overlaid in large, yellow, outlined letters across the middle of the image.

# AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

# WHAT IS AN AMENDMENT?



- **The Framers knew they could not predict the future or write a perfect document**
- **Therefore the Constitution provides a process for amendments to it**
- **An amendment is a change or addition to the Constitution's written words**

# HOW IS AN AMENDMENT PROPOSED?

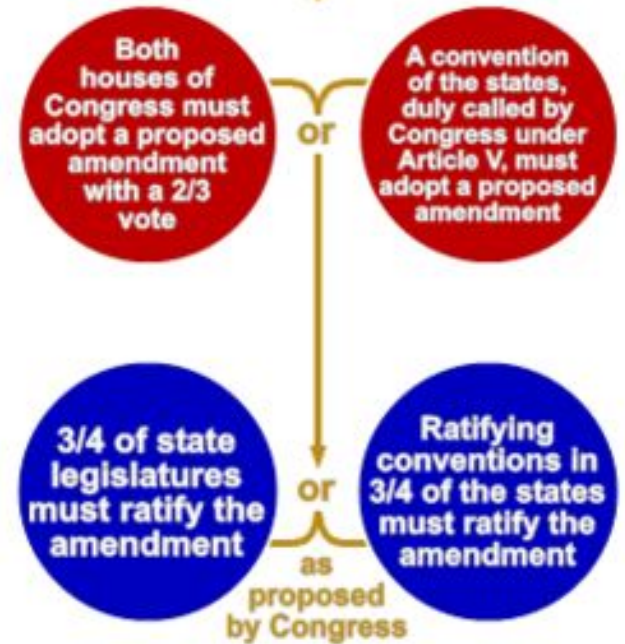
- **An Amendment can be proposed in 2 ways:**
  - **by Congress by a 2/3 vote in both houses.**
  - **at a national convention called by Congress when requested by 2/3 of the State**



# HOW IS AN AMENDMENT RATIFIED?

- **Amendments to the Constitution must be ratified or approved**
- **They can be ratified in 1 of 2 ways:**
  - **by 3/4 of the State legislatures**
  - **by conventions in 3/4 of the States**

## AMENDING THE U.S. CONSTITUTION



The ratifying convention option has been used only once, for the Twenty-first Amendment.

On all but two occasions since 1917, Congress has limited the length of time the states have to ratify an amendment. An amendment must be ratified by the requisite number of states within the stated period in order to become operative.

33 constitutional amendments have been adopted by both houses of Congress and sent to the states for ratification since 1789. Of those, only 27 have been ratified by the requisite number of states and became valid as part of the United States Constitution.

## Step 1 Amendment Is Proposed

Proposed by Congress by  
a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote in both houses



Proposed at a national convention  
called by Congress when  
requested by  $\frac{2}{3}$  (34) of  
the State legislatures

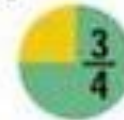


## Step 2 Amendment Is Ratified

Ratified by the State  
legislatures of  $\frac{3}{4}$  (38)  
of the States



Ratified by conventions held  
in  $\frac{3}{4}$  (38) of the States



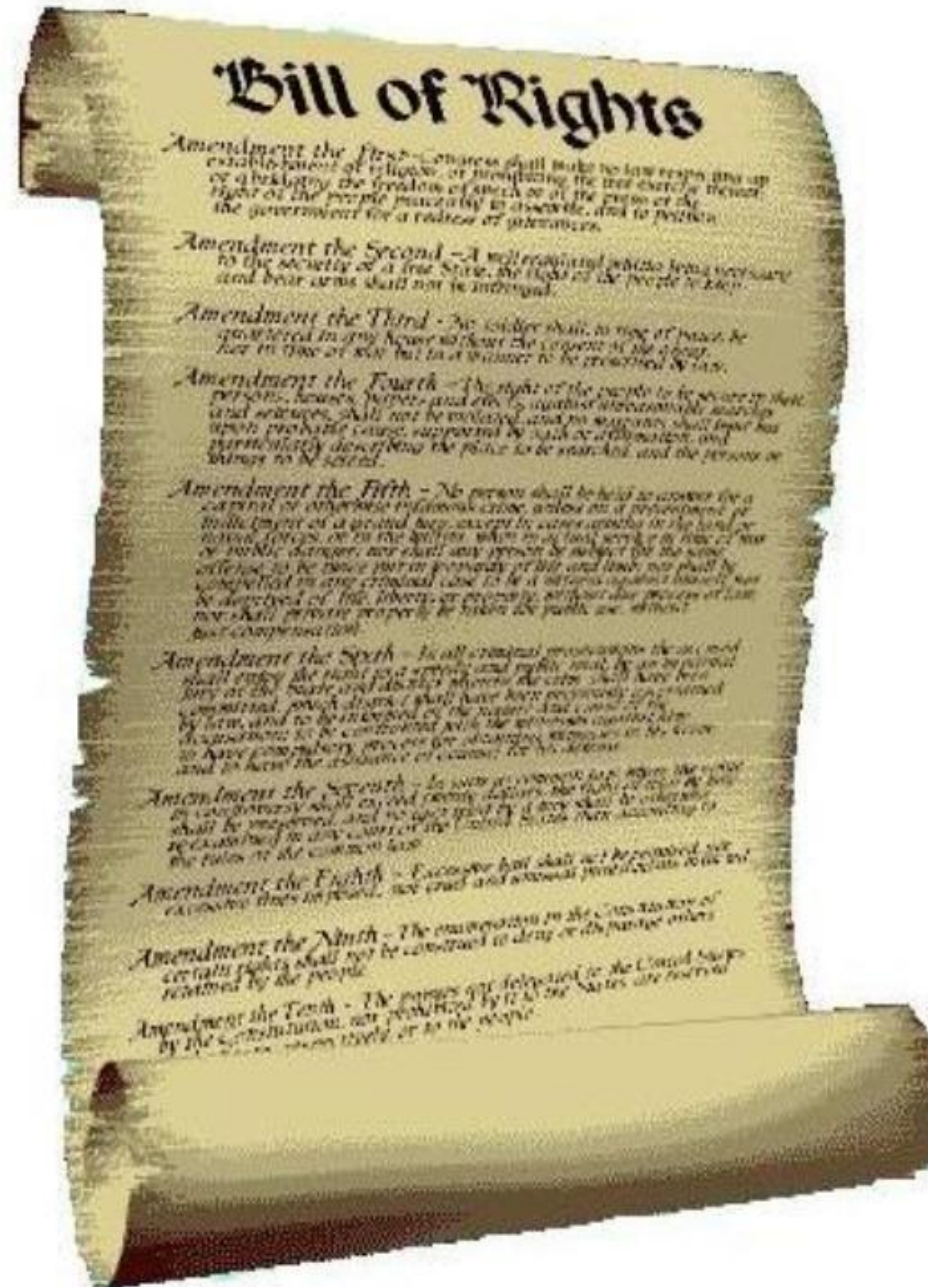
# THE INFORMAL AMENDMENT PROCESS

- **Process through which changes have been made to the Constitution over time without changing the written words of the document**
- **Examples of this include:**
  - **Congressional Legislation (Laws)**
  - **Presidential (Executive) Action**
  - **Supreme Court Decisions**
  - **Political Party Practices**
  - **Custom**



# THE AMENDMENTS

- There have been 27 Amendments to the Constitution
- The 1<sup>st</sup> 10 are known as the Bill of Rights and were ratified in 1791
- The last was in 1992



# THE AMENDMENTS

- **Some of the more well-known amendments include**

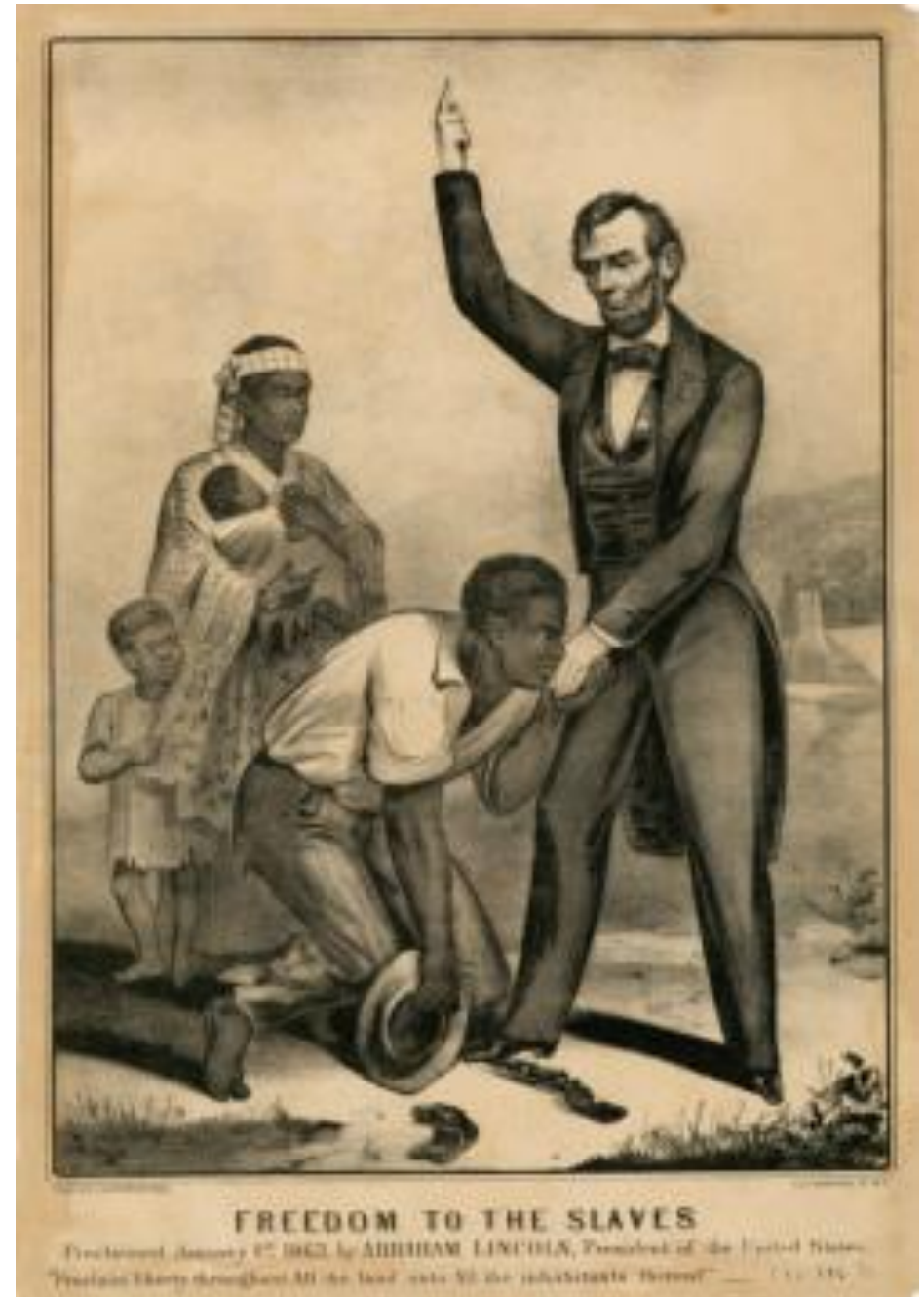




13TH

**Banned  
slavery in the  
US forever**

**1865**

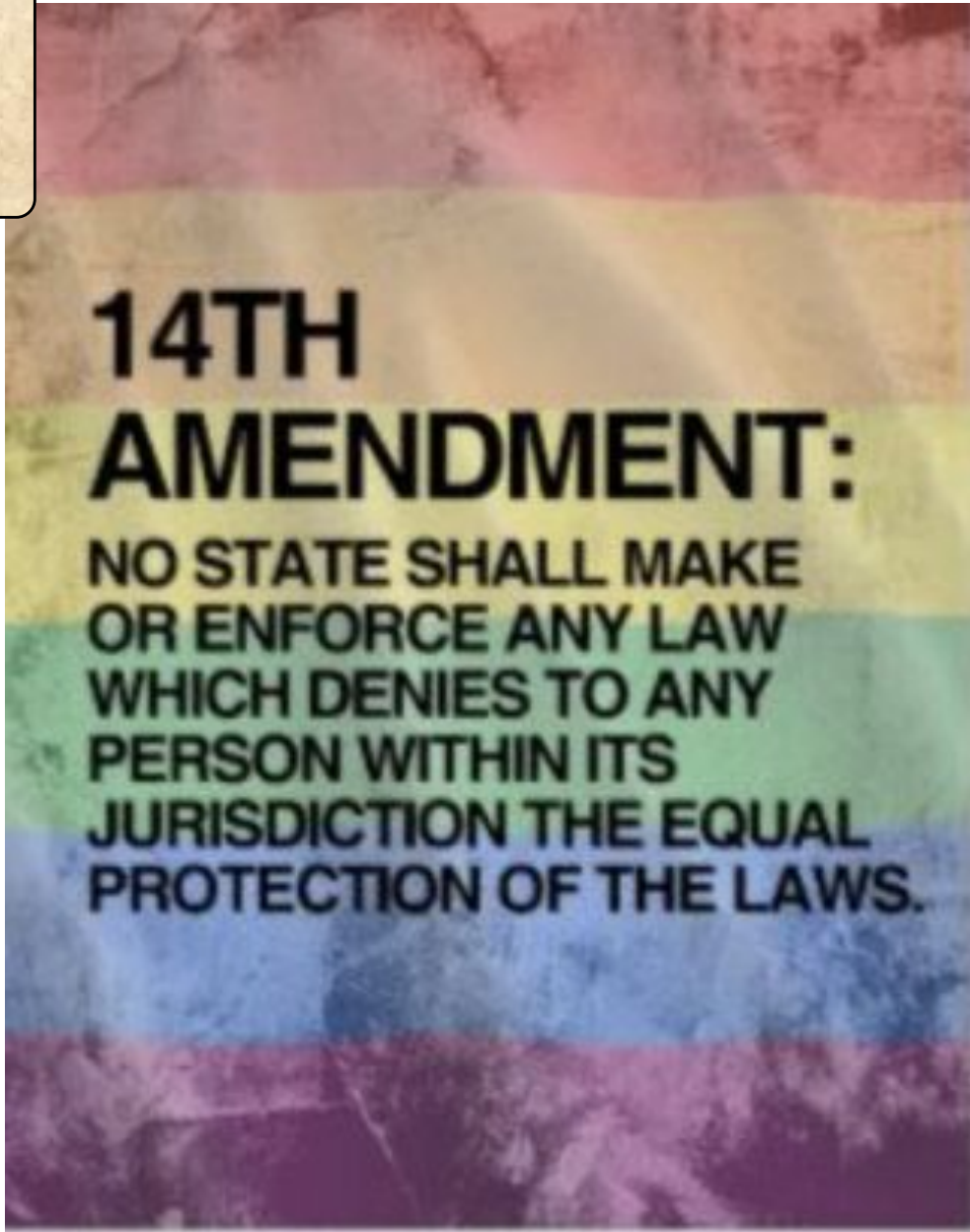




14<sup>TH</sup>

**Establishes  
citizenship &  
equal protection  
under the law**

**1868**

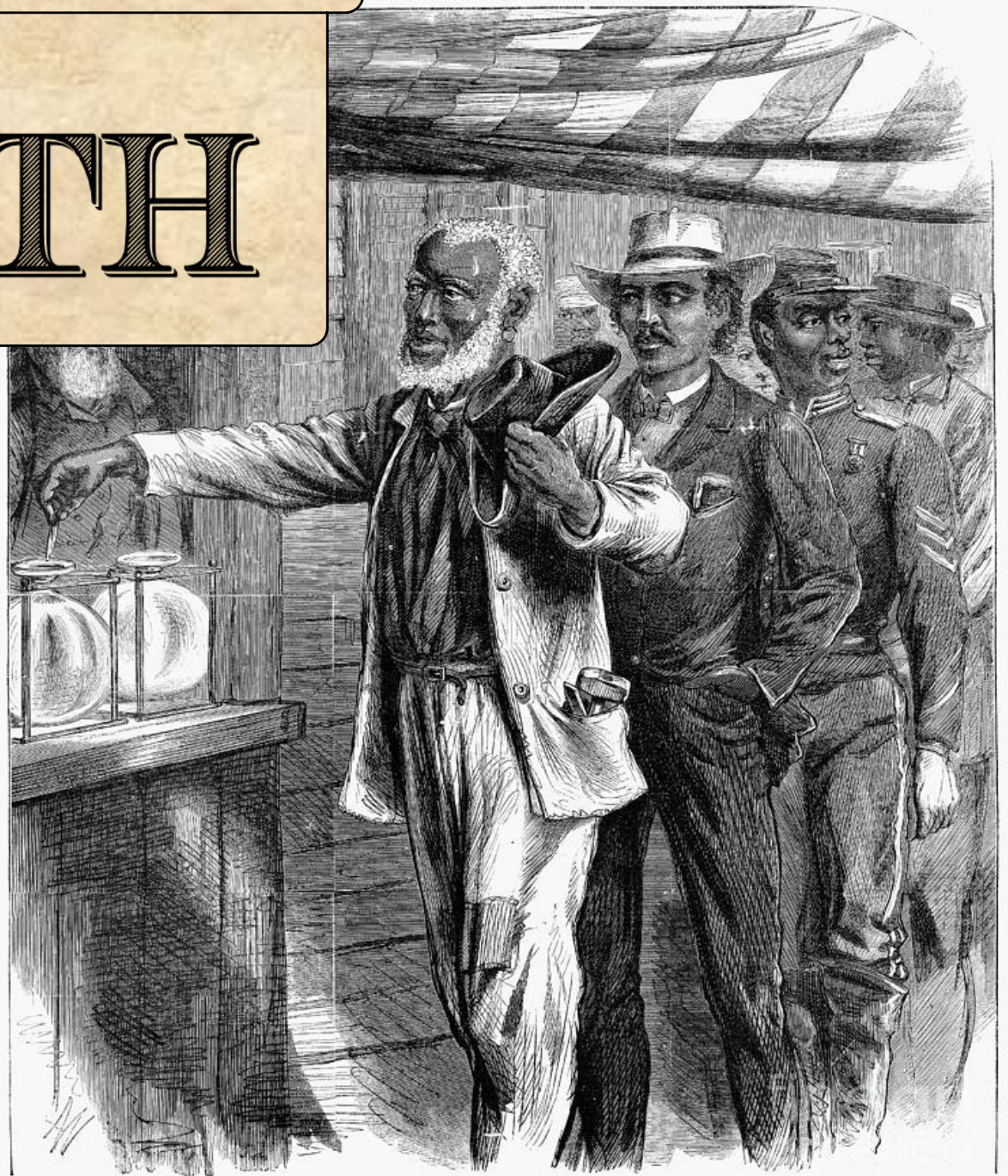


**14TH  
AMENDMENT:**  
NO STATE SHALL MAKE  
OR ENFORCE ANY LAW  
WHICH DENIES TO ANY  
PERSON WITHIN ITS  
JURISDICTION THE EQUAL  
PROTECTION OF THE LAWS.

15TH

**Guaranteed  
former slaves  
and all male  
citizens the  
right to vote**

**1870**



"THE FIRST VOTE."—DRAWN BY A. R. WAUGH.—[SEE NEXT PAGE.]

18TH

**Banned the  
production  
& sale of  
alcohol -  
Prohibition**

**1917**





19TH

**Gave women the  
right to vote**

**1920**

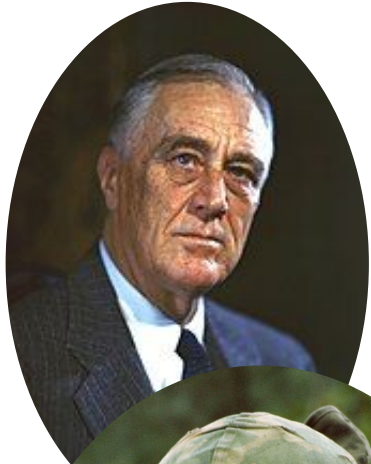


21ST

Ended  
Prohibition

1933

# OTHER AMENDMENTS



**22<sup>nd</sup> - set term limits for the president**



**25<sup>th</sup> - deals with presidential succession & disability**

**26<sup>th</sup> - lowered voting age to**

**18**  
**27<sup>th</sup> - deals with salaries of Congress members**