

Founding Principles

BILL *of* RIGHTS
INSTITUTE



Bill Of Rights

✓ Freedom of Religion

The right to choose one's religion or form of worship, if any, without interference; freedom of conscience.

✓ Freedom of Speech, Press, and Assembly

The right to express one's opinions freely, orally or in writing and the right to gather with others in groups of one's choice without arbitrary or unreasonable restrictions.

✓ Private Property

The natural right of all individuals to create, obtain, and control their possessions, beliefs, faculties, and opinions as well as the fruits of their labor.



Constitutional/ Auxiliary Precautions

✓ Separation of Powers

Each division of government exercises distinct powers to carry out its functions and to prevent the accumulation of power.

✓ Checks and Balances

The branches of government each have powers to limit the powers of the other branches and to prevent any branch from becoming too powerful.

✓ Federalism

The national and state governments have a balance of separate and shared powers. The people delegate certain powers to the national government, while the states retain other powers; and the people retain all powers not delegated to the governing bodies.



Limited Government

✓ Rule of Law

Government and citizens all abide by the same laws regardless of political power. Those laws must be stable and justly applied.

✓ Due Process

The government must apply law and rules equally to all people.

Drawn from an examination of human nature, these principles and virtues shape the American republic with ordered liberty and help form the conscience of the nation. The American regime is built upon a philosophical foundation that makes an argument for a constitutional republic. The graphic here outlines the logic of this argument. Principles are fundamental truths, or first things, upon which other ideas are based. The principles listed here define the protections built into the United States Constitution for the purpose of maintaining our fundamental natural rights to life, liberty, and equality. In understanding these principles, We the People are better able to protect and advance liberty and opportunity for all. The list is not comprehensive but provides a starting place for the investigation of the American experiment in self-government.



Consent And Republican Government

✓ Majority Rule/ Minority Rights

Laws are made with the consent of the majority but do not infringe on the inalienable rights of the minority.

✓ Consent of the Governed

The power of government comes from the people.

✓ Democracy

A form of government in which ultimate authority is based directly on the will of the people.

✓ Republic

A constitutional form of government with elected representatives who represent and "refine and enlarge" the will of the people.



Natural Rights Foundation

✓ Natural/ Inalienable Rights

Rights which belong to humans by nature and can only be justly abridged through due process. Examples are life, liberty, and property.

✓ Liberty

The power to think and act as one sees fit without restraint except by the laws of nature and interfering with someone else's rights.

✓ Equality

All individuals have the same claim as human beings to natural rights and treatment under the law.

✓ Justice

Having a political order that protects the rights of all equally and treats everyone equally under the law.