

Selecting a Topic for a Proposed Amendment

The following guidelines will help you select a topic for your proposed amendment.

1. Select and register your amendment topic **as soon as possible**. To avoid duplication similar topics will not be accepted. In two proposed topics are deemed too similar, only the first we receive will be accepted.
2. One way to select a topic is by first identifying a problem that can best be resolved by amending the constitution. (see Drafting a Statement of Need).
3. You can also begin by researching what amendments have been proposed in the past. Your topic does not need to be original; indeed it would be very difficult to find a unique topic. Since 1789 almost 12,000 proposed amendments have been introduced in Congress! However, very few received serious consideration. See list below or search for proposed amendments on the internet.
4. Get ideas from your teachers, parents and others whom you respect.
5. Your topic should be specific and narrow enough that your proposed amendment can meet the limitations of this competition. It should address a single issue.
6. The topic should be necessary and consistent with the goal of defining the powers and limitations of the Federal government, or should it more appropriately be addressed through legislation.
7. The topic you choose should be one which you believe would be in the best interest of the nation. And you should be prepared to explain why.
8. Once you have selected a topic, decide on a title that is descriptive, brief and captures the imagination.

Possible Topics for a Proposed Amendment

- Balanced Budget
 - Line-item veto
 - Limit budget earmarks
- School Choice
- Term Limits for Congress or other federal officers
- Judicial Reform – possibilities include
 - Judicial Term Limits for all Federal Judges
 - Supreme Court Reform - might include setting the number of justices, term limits, qualifications, mandatory retirement age, etc.
- Single Issue legislation
- Change the Amendment Process
- Qualifications to hold elective office
 - Set or change maximum/minimum age levels
- The Electoral College
 - Allocation of Electoral Votes by Congressional District
 - Abolish the Electoral College and elect the president by popular vote
- Voting Rights and Security
 - Require or prohibit Voter ID in national elections
 - Establish a federal voter ID database
 - Secure to the States the election process
 - Ranked Choice Voting
 - Allow or prohibit voting rights for non-citizens
- Requirements for citizenship
 - Change natural born citizenship
 - Establish or restrict a pathway to citizenship to those who have entered the country without first having received a visa, or who have overstayed their temporary visa.