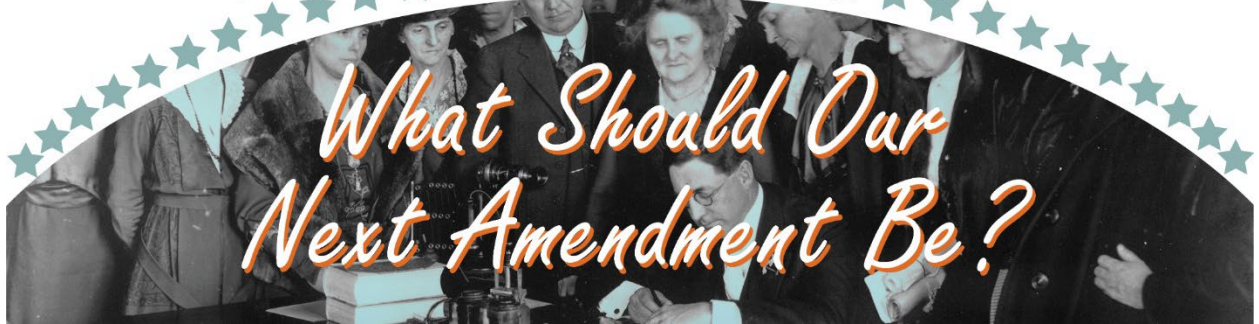


# 2023 NINTH CIRCUIT ESSAY CONTEST

## The 28<sup>th</sup> Amendment



**Who May Enter:** The 2023 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest is open to high school students in Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington state, the United States Territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Students in the 9th through 12th grades attending public, private, parochial and charter schools, and home-schooled students of equivalent grade status, are invited to participate. Children of federal judges, chambers staff and employees of federal court offices are not eligible to participate.

**Contest Theme:** “The 28th Amendment to the United States Constitution: What Should Our Next Amendment Be?”

The United States Constitution has three main functions. It creates a national government consisting of three branches—executive, legislative, and judicial. It divides governmental powers between the federal government and the states. It also protects individual liberties from the government.

Since the Constitution was ratified in 1789, more than 12,000 amendments have been proposed and many remain pending as partially approved. Only 27 amendments have been successfully ratified and incorporated into the U.S. Constitution. For example: The First Amendment (1791) protects the freedom of speech, freedom of the press and the free exercise of religion. The First Amendment also prevents the government from favoring one religion over another. The 13th Amendment (1865) abolished slavery. The 19th Amendment (1920) guaranteed women the right to vote. Other amendments were proposed but have not been ratified, including banning flag burning, guaranteeing equal rights regardless of sex, electing the president by popular vote, curbing climate change and guaranteeing the right to privacy.

**Students are asked:** “What amendment would you propose for our Constitution? Why? How would you get your amendment ratified?”

**Length and Format:** Individual students can express their thoughts and ideas in an essay of between 500 and 1,000 words. Footnotes and bibliographies will not be included in the word count and will be credited during judging. **Essays must be submitted as a Word or PDF file attachment** at <https://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest>. When completing your information to enter the contest, you will be provided instructions on how to upload your essay entry. You will receive an email confirmation after you upload your essay successfully and complete your entry by hitting “submit” at the end. A student submitting an essay is not required to submit a video. You have the option to submit an essay and a video but can only submit one of each.

The essay should 1) **describe your proposed amendment and explain why it is needed today, supporting your argument with legal and/or historical examples;** and 2) **describe the process you would use to get your amendment ratified.**

**Contest Duration:** Entries will be accepted starting Jan. 4, 2023. **Deadline for entries has been extended to 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time, March 20, 2023.** Finalists will be announced in May and winners in June.

**Judging:** Judging will be based on the following criteria.

- 1. Understanding of constitutional principles** **40 points**  
Essay demonstrates clear understanding of: (a) the proposed amendment, providing legal and/or historical examples and (b) the process of getting a constitutional amendment ratified
- 2. Clarity and effectiveness in expressing the theme** **30 points**  
Essay organizes and communicates concepts and ideas clearly
- 3. Grammar, spelling and composition** **25 points**  
Essay uses correct spelling, proper grammar and sentence composition
- 4. Use of footnotes, bibliographies** **5 points**  
Essay properly identifies and attributes information taken from other sources

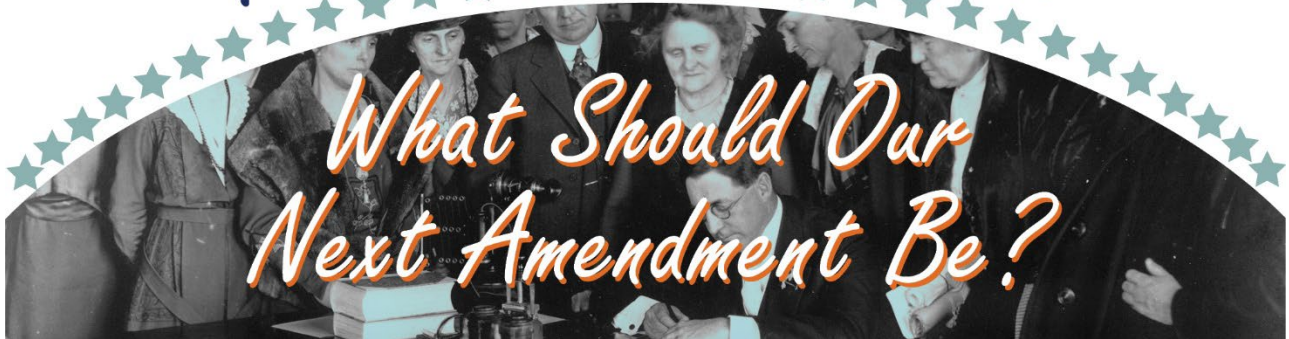
**Release Forms:** If you are selected as one of the finalists, you will be required to submit a release form allowing the Ninth Circuit to publish your essay in print publications and/or on public court websites. Contest winners will be required to provide and authorize use of photographs and/or videos of themselves in contest-related promotional materials.

**Disqualification:** Providing false information, not adhering to the rules, not meeting the submission deadline or not providing a release form if requested may result in disqualification.

**Questions:** Contact Katherine M. Rodriguez at [civicscontest@ce9.uscourts.gov](mailto:civicscontest@ce9.uscourts.gov).

# 2023 NINTH CIRCUIT VIDEO CONTEST

## The 28<sup>th</sup> Amendment



**Who May Enter:** The 2023 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest is open to high school students in Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington state, the United States Territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Students in the 9th through 12th grades attending public, private, parochial and charter schools and home-schooled students of equivalent grade status, are invited to participate. Children of federal judges, chambers staff and employees of federal court offices are not eligible to participate.

**Contest Theme:** “The 28th Amendment to the United States Constitution: What Should Our Next Amendment Be?”

The United States Constitution has three main functions. It creates a national government consisting of three branches—executive, legislative, and judicial. It divides governmental powers between the federal government and the states. It also protects individual liberties from the government.

Since the Constitution was ratified in 1789, more than 12,000 amendments have been proposed and many remain pending as partially approved. Only 27 amendments have been successfully ratified and incorporated into the U.S. Constitution. For example: The First Amendment (1791) protects the freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and the free exercise of religion. The First Amendment also prevents the government from favoring one religion over another. The 13th Amendment (1865) abolished slavery. The 19th Amendment (1920) guaranteed women the right to vote. Other amendments were proposed but have not been ratified, including banning flag burning, guaranteeing equal rights regardless of sex, electing the president by popular vote, curbing climate change, and guaranteeing the right to privacy.

**Students are asked:** “What amendment would you propose for our Constitution? Why? How would you get your amendment ratified?”

**Length and Format:** Individuals or teams of up to three students can produce a 3-5 minute video (not including end credits). Submit as MOV, MPEG4, MPEG2 or WMV files. Resolutions of 720x486

pixels to 1920x1080 pixels are acceptable. Files may not exceed 1GB. Videos should be compressed using the H.264 codec. Video entry must be uploaded at <http://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest>. When completing your information to enter the contest, you will be provided instructions on how to upload your video entry. If entering as a team, make sure to include all members of your team and their contact information. You will receive an email confirmation after you upload your video successfully. A student submitting a video is not required to submit an essay. You have the option to submit a video and an essay but can only submit one of each.

The video should 1) **describe your proposed amendment and explain why it is needed today, supporting your argument with legal and/or historical examples;** and 2) **describe the process you would use to get your amendment ratified.**

**Contest Duration:** Entries will be accepted starting Jan. 4, 2023. **Deadline for entries has been extended to 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time, March 20, 2023.** Finalists will be announced in May and winners in June.

**Judging:** Judging will be based on the following criteria.

- |    |  |                  |
|----|--|------------------|
| 1. | <b>Understanding of the theme</b><br><u>Video demonstrates clear understanding of:</u> (a) the proposed amendment, providing legal and/or historical examples and (b) the process of getting a constitutional amendment ratified | <b>30 points</b> |
| 2. | <b>Video exhibits originality and creativity,</b><br><i>in a manner connected to the theme</i>   | <b>25 points</b> |
| 3. | <b>Video engages the viewer on emotional/subjective level,</b><br><i>in a manner connected to the theme</i>  | <b>25 points</b> |
| 3. | <b>Video displays good production values</b><br>audio/video quality and editing  | <b>10 points</b> |
| 4. | <b>Respects copyright rules or demonstrates creativity in use of individual's own artistic and creative abilities</b><br>properly credits content sources  | <b>10 points</b> |

**Release Forms:** If you are selected as one of the finalists, you will be required to submit a release form allowing the Ninth Circuit to display your video at public events and on public websites. Contest winners will be required to provide and authorize use of photographs and/or videos of themselves in contest-related promotional materials.

**Disqualification:** Providing false information, not adhering to the rules, not meeting the submission deadline or not providing a release form if requested may result in disqualification.

**Questions:** Contact Katherine M. Rodriguez at [civicscontest@ce9.uscourts.gov](mailto:civicscontest@ce9.uscourts.gov).