

THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

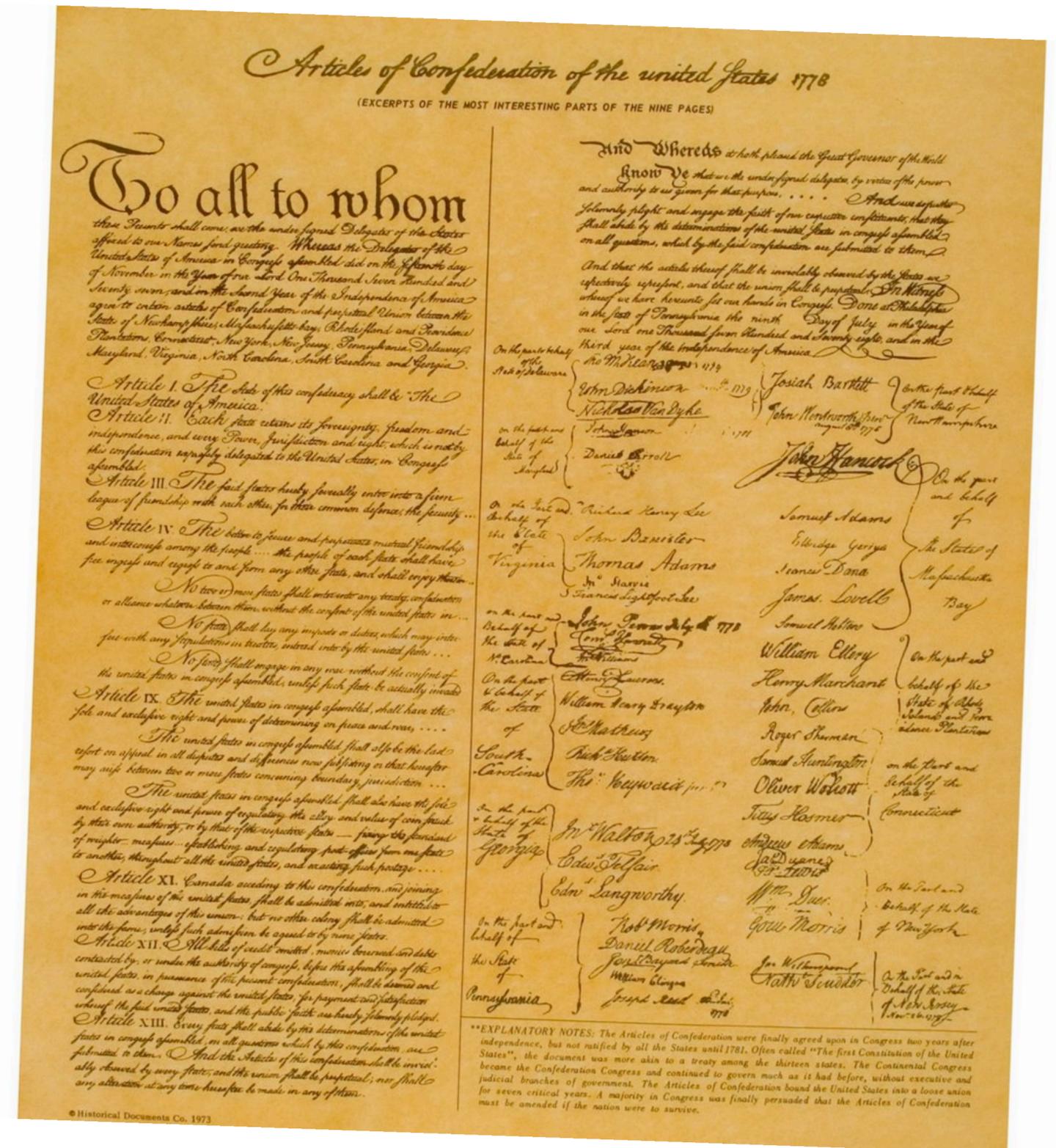
"AN APPLE OF GOLD"



ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

A confederation is an agreement between allies to unite if needed to fend off more powerful foes.

As a method of government, it had serious shortcomings.

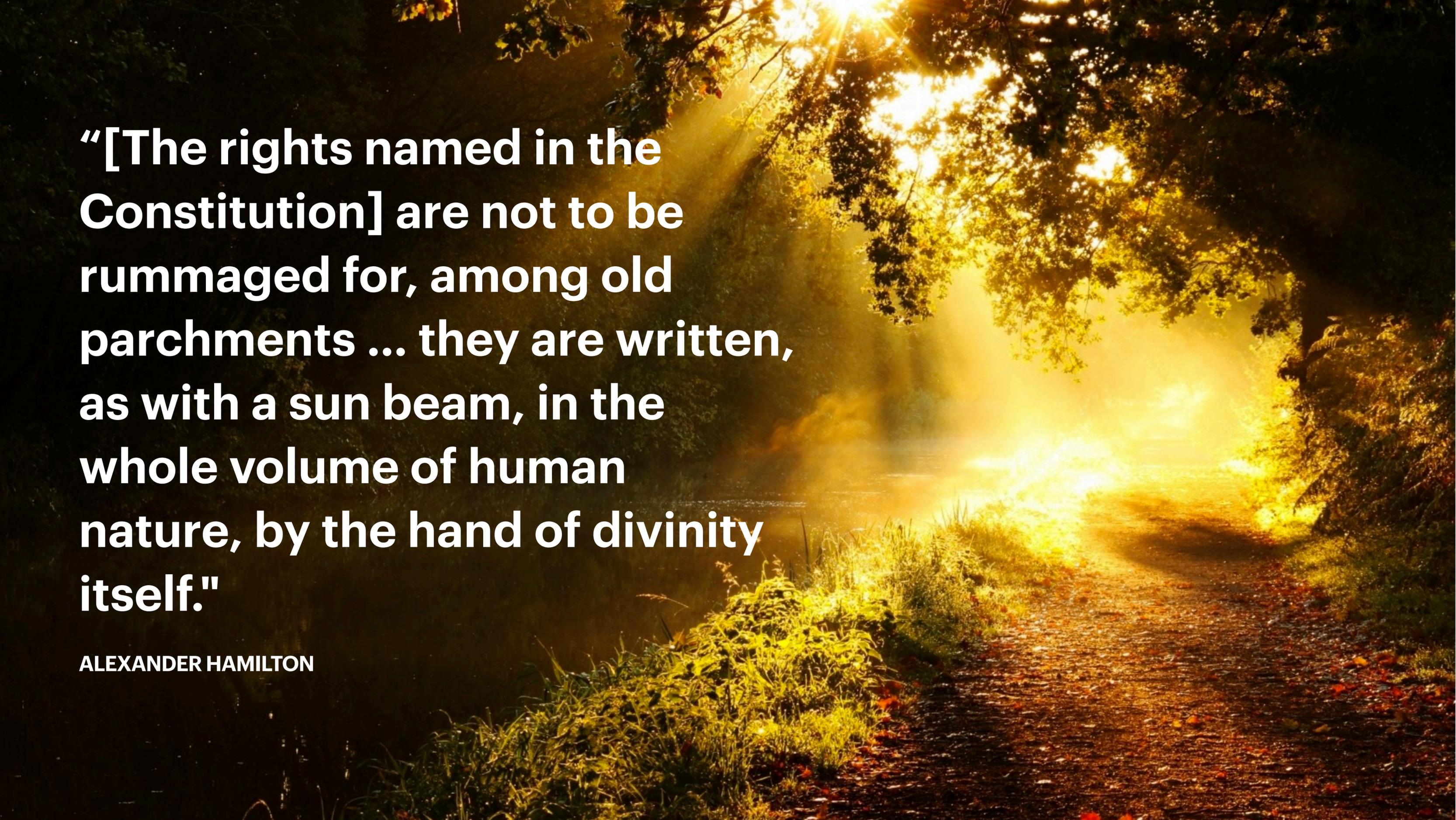




CONSTITUTION

A Constitution is a law passed by the people, which serves as the ultimate law of the land, and under which all other laws and actions must adhere.

THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

A scenic autumn landscape featuring a sunlit path through trees and a body of water. The sun is low in the sky, creating a warm, golden glow that filters through the leaves and illuminates the path. The path is covered in fallen leaves, and the surrounding vegetation is in various shades of green and yellow. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and serene.

"[The rights named in the Constitution] are not to be rummaged for, among old parchments ... they are written, as with a sun beam, in the whole volume of human nature, by the hand of divinity itself."

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

5 THEMES

1. The government's power must be limited
2. The Constitution is the supreme law of the land
3. Separation of power/checks and balances
4. Individual rights
5. Popular sovereignty

3 MAIN SECTIONS

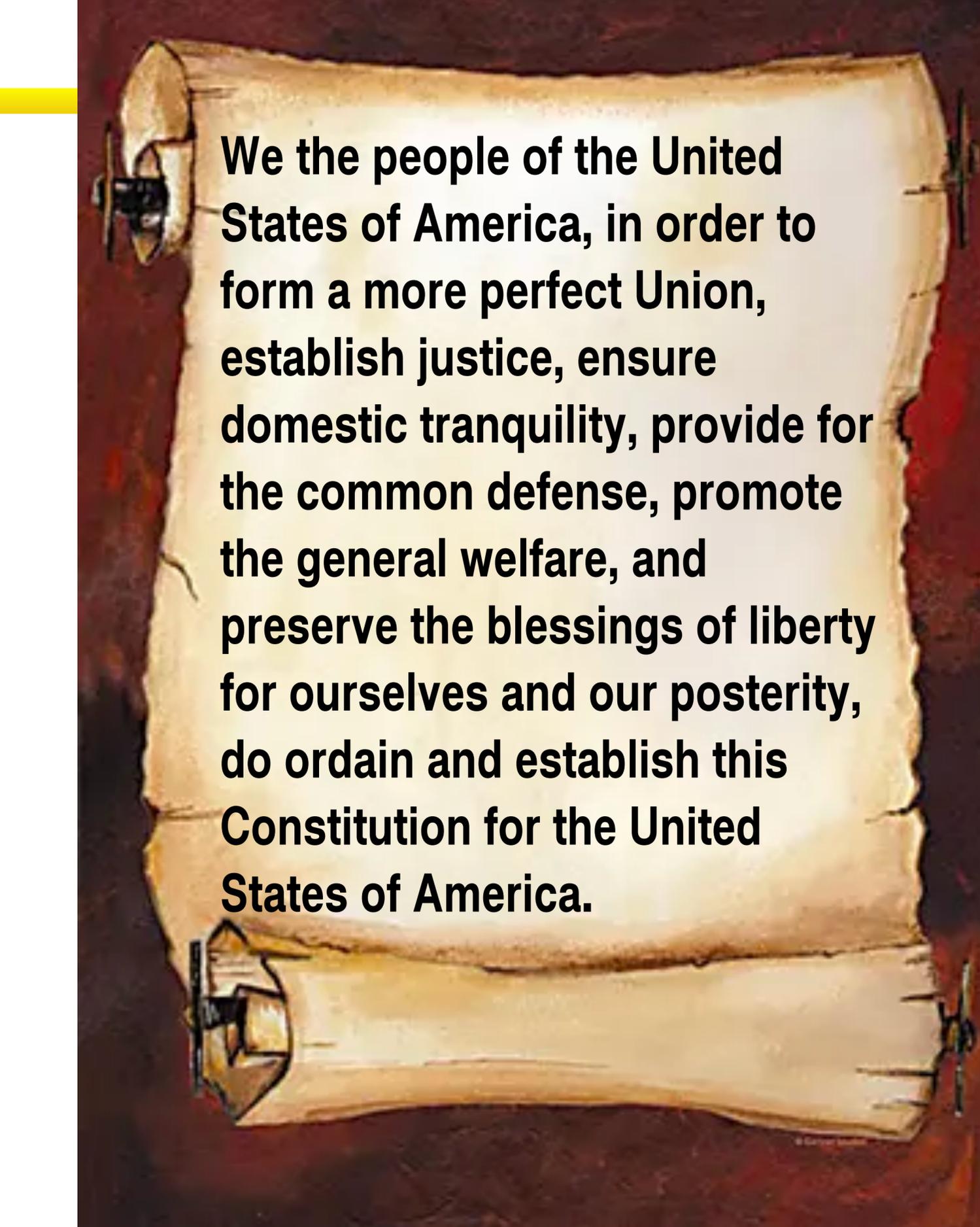
1. The Preamble
2. The Articles
3. The Amendments

THE DECLARATION & CONSTITUTION

1. They work together
2. Declaration — the charter
3. Constitution — the bylaws
4. The Bill of Rights — the rights of the citizens and the states

THE CONSTITUTION

- 1. About 4,500 words**
- 2. Roughly 4,000 words describe how the branches of government are to operate**
- 3. Another 400+ words describe the relationship between the states and how Amendments are to be made**

A scroll with text on a dark red background. The scroll is unrolled, showing the text. The text is in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The scroll has a yellow border on the left side.

We the people of the United States of America, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and preserve the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

THE FIRST 52 WORDS

State the purpose for the Constitution (and the Union itself).

They define and limit the remaining words of the Constitution.

They assume the truths of the Declaration of Independence.

THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Purpose

- 1. To borrow and coin money**
- 2. To regulate commerce**
- 3. To regulate immigration**
- 4. To set up a post office and build roads**
- 5. To create an environment in which commerce can flourish**
- 6. To maintain an army, navy and militias**
- 7. To declare war**
- 8. To conduct impeachments**
- 9. To oversee the District of Columbia**
- 10. To make laws limited to the 6 purposes in the Preamble and these areas**

THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Purpose

1. To be the military Commander in Chief
2. To appoint ambassadors, judges and officers
3. To enforce the laws of the United States
4. To sign treaties and receive foreign ambassadors
5. To grant pardons
6. To give the State of the Union to Congress

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THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

Purpose

- 1. To take appeals from citizens, courts and states**
- 2. To make principled judgments**
- 3. To ensure jury trials**
- 4. To uphold the constitution**

ALL 3 BRANCHES ARE TO UPHOLD THE CONSTITUTION



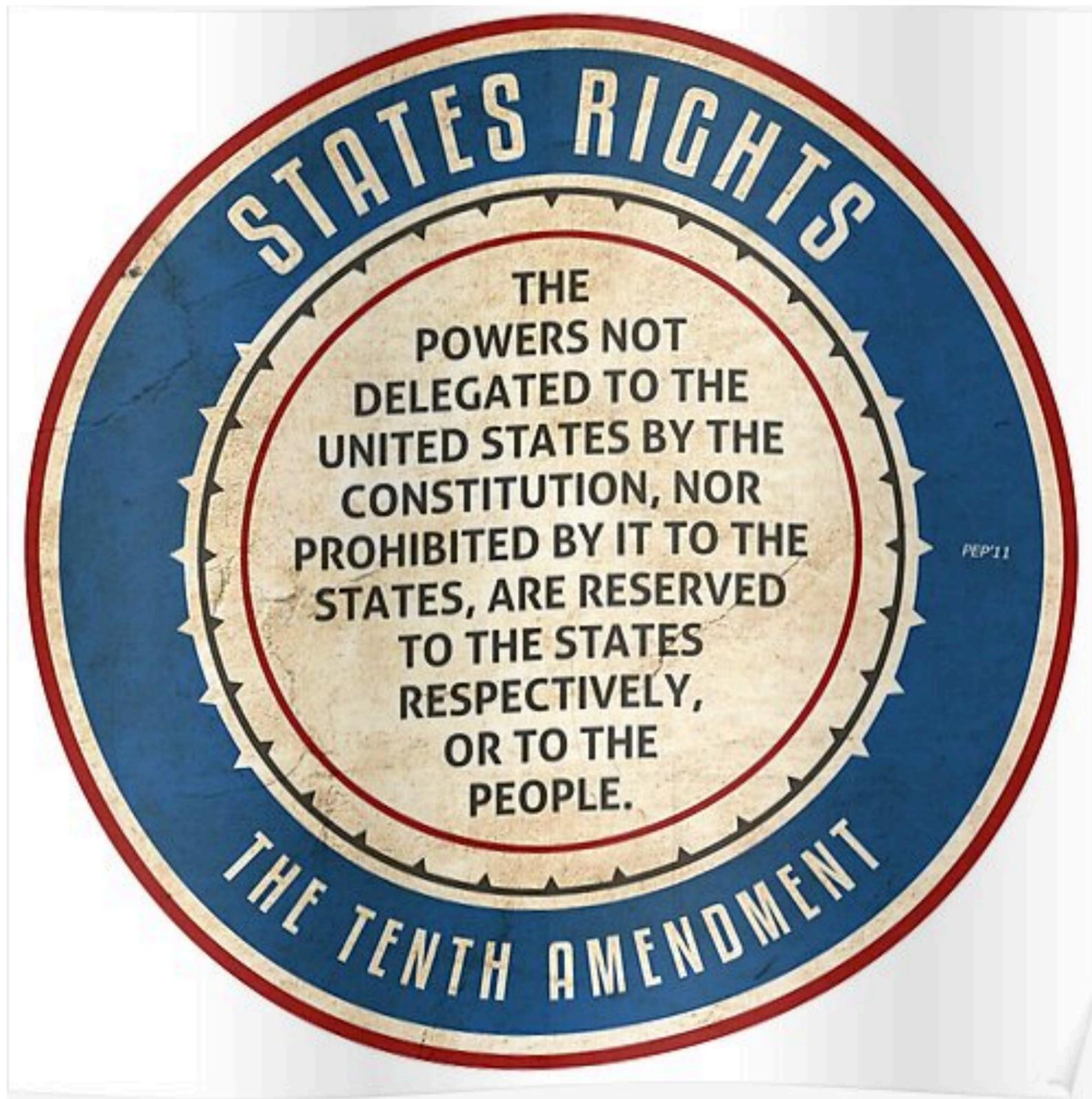
NOT JUST THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

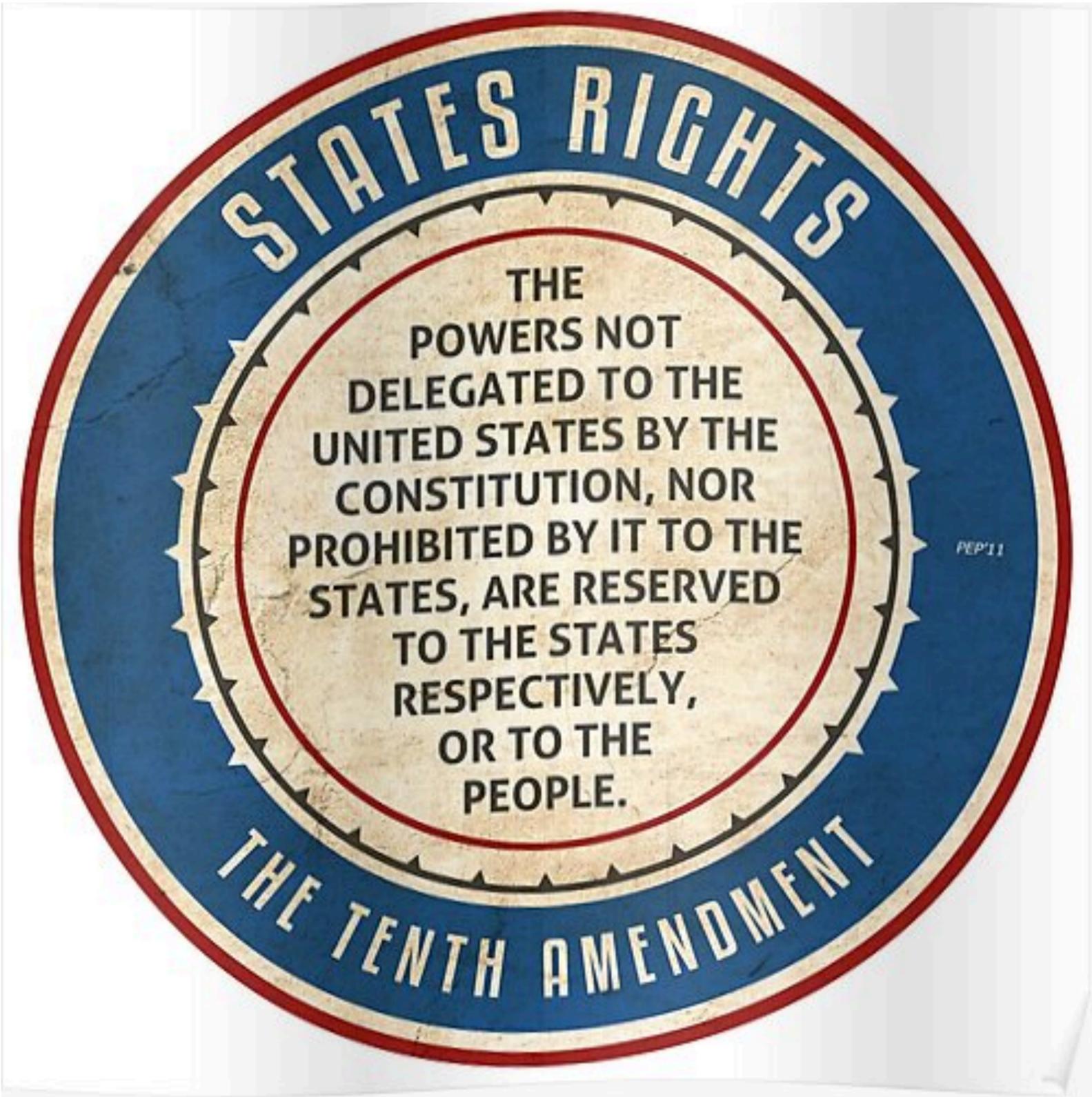
BALANCE OF POWER

Congress was designed to be slightly more powerful than the other two branches because it is **closer to the people**. The House is made more powerful than the Senate.

The Executive branch (President) implements the laws passed by Congress, and has war-time power, but otherwise has **medium power**.

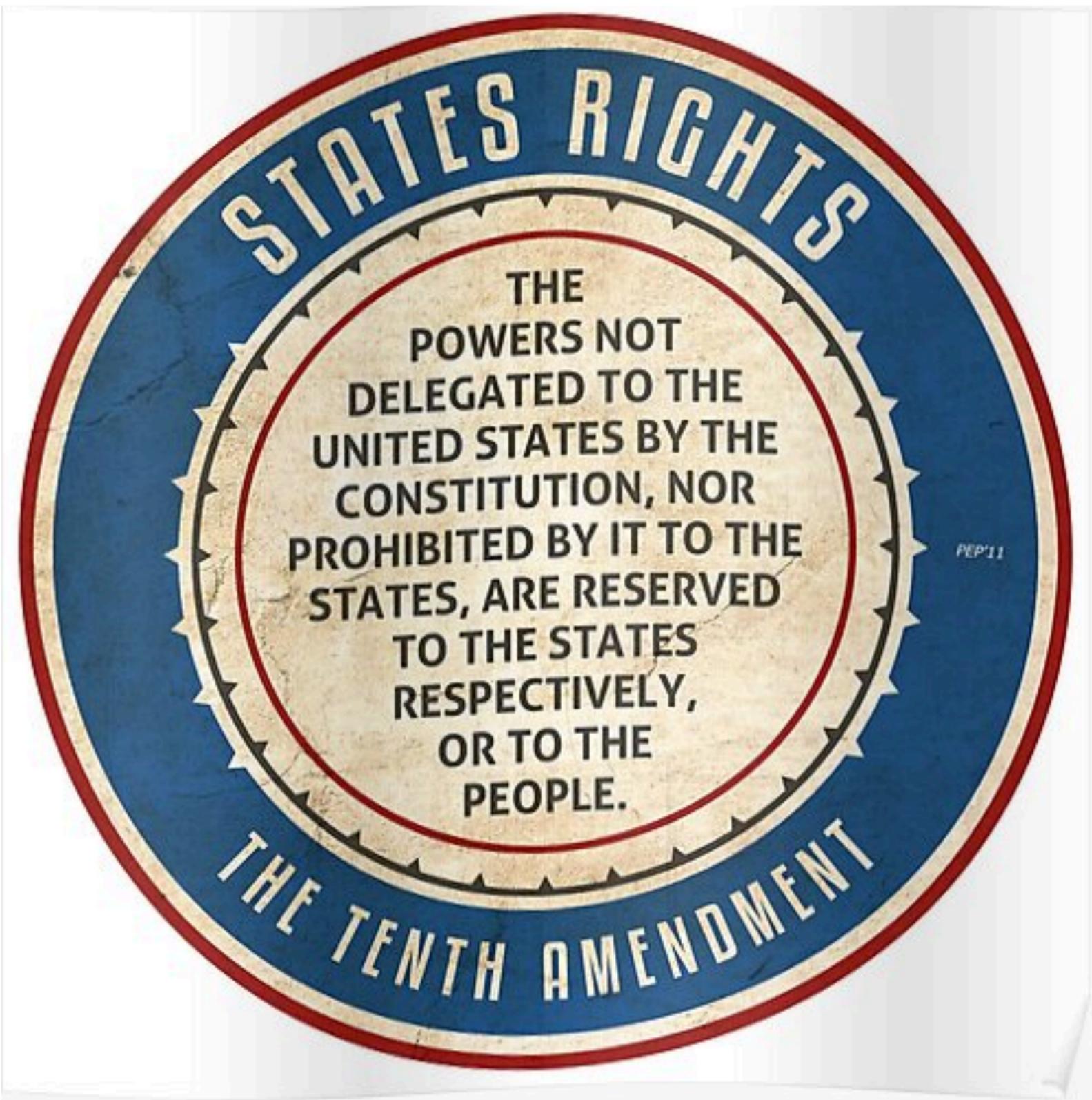
The Judiciary provides checks and balances, but is **the least powerful** of the three branches because Supreme Court judges are appointed for life.





AMENDMENT MEANING

The states have the right to make their own laws and regulations as long as the laws do not go against a Federal law such as voting age.



FEDERAL OVERREACH & THE 10TH

States can resist Federal overreach.

James Madison suggested that the people refuse to cooperate with Federal laws that are unconstitutional. Laws are enforced at the local level.

He encouraged governors to publicly speak out against unconstitutional laws.

He suggested states pass their own laws, which would stand up against Federal laws if they were unconstitutional.