



PROTECTING
THE
BILL OF RIGHTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

How to Use this Toolkit	3
Options for Engagement	4
The Bill of Rights	5
Understanding Why the Bill of Rights Is under Attack	7
Sample Social Media	8
Talking Points on the Second Amendment	9
How to Write a Letter to the Editor	10
Sample Letter to the Editor	11
Sample Letter to Congress	12
Tea Party Patriots' Letter to Rep. Roskam	13
About Tea Party Patriots	15

How to Use This Toolkit

The Bill of Rights – the first ten amendments to the Constitution – contains some of our most cherished rights, including freedom of speech, freedom of religion, the right to keep and bear arms, due process, and many others. The Bill of Rights protects our liberties by constraining government in very specific ways.

It is easy to take the Bill of Rights for granted because it is such an important part of the fabric of our society. In recent years, however, we have seen new attacks on almost every single one of our rights contained in the Bill of Rights. Whether it's the federal government clamping down on free speech (as it did in the IRS targeting scandal), or diminishing the freedom of religion, or Congress trying to restrict our 2nd Amendment right to own guns, or even the federal government's attempts to expand its authority and seize powers that belong to the states, we are witnessing an erosion of the very freedoms and liberties that make the United States so unique.

It is important for us, as activists who love the Constitution and want to protect the Bill of Rights, to take decisive actions to let our representatives in Washington, DC, know how important each right in the Bill of Rights is, and why each must be protected.

Included in this toolkit, you will find sample social media, a sample letter to Members of Congress, and a sample letter to the editor, among other resources. We look forward to hearing how you use this toolkit!

In liberty,

The Tea Party Patriots Support Team

Options for Engagement

- Write 1 Facebook post to share with your friends about one of our liberties protected in the Bill of Rights (for example, the right to freedom of religion) (total time: 10 minutes)
- Tweet about the Bill of Rights – especially the First and Second Amendments (total time: 10 minutes)
- Write a letter to the editor about protecting the First or Second Amendment. (total time: 1 hour)
- Write an email or letter to your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators asking them to support the Second Amendment. (total time: 30 minutes)
- Sign our petition and be sure to “check the box” so we can send your petition to your Congressman (total time: 5 minutes). Our petition can be found here: <https://impeachjohn.act.tepartypatriots.org/>
- Share our petition on social media (total time: 5 minutes). Our petition can be found here: <https://impeachjohn.act.tepartypatriots.org/>

The Bill of Rights

Background:

The first ten amendments to the Constitution are the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights safeguards individual liberties by constraining the federal government in very specific ways. Each amendment describes a different prohibition on the government's power.

Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Amendment II

A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

Amendment III

No soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

Amendment IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Amendment V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Amendment VI

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the state and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

Amendment VII

In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise reexamined in any court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

Amendment VIII

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Amendment IX

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Amendment X

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.

Understanding Why the Bill of Rights Is under Attack

It should come as no great surprise that the federal government is undermining the Bill of Rights. In fact, the temptation for government to grow, exceed its powers, and – by extension – curtail individual liberties, is such a predictable and universal tendency that our nation’s Founding Fathers crafted the first 10 amendments in direct response to that propensity.

In recent years, we have witnessed attacks on nearly every aspect of the Bill of Rights, and, in some cases, the government has simultaneously chipped away at several individual liberties in one fell swoop.

Take, for example, Obamacare. The healthcare takeover law, which was enacted in 2010, undermines several aspects of the Bill of Rights at the same time. The federal government’s heavy-handed dictates about Medicaid expansion and implementation of the law clearly violated the 10th Amendment’s protections of states’ rights. In implementing Obamacare, the federal government has consistently argued that religious organizations must provide birth control and abortifacients, despite their religious objections. The federal government’s insistence that companies, organizations, and individuals ignore their deeply-held beliefs in order to comply with the healthcare law is a very clear example of the federal government’s hostilities toward the First Amendment’s protections of religious freedom.

The IRS targeting scandal – in which conservatives were singled out and treated unfairly by the IRS – is a chilling example of the federal government’s willful disregard for the First Amendment’s protections of free speech, our right to form associations, and our right to petition the government.

Lately, there have been renewed calls to tighten the restrictions on the Second Amendment and to create more loopholes and barriers to gun ownership.

Countless governments throughout history and across the globe have denied individuals the rights contained in our Bill of Rights. In crafting and ratifying the Bill of Rights, our Founding Fathers affirmed that the United States would be a special place, where the citizens would hold their government in check – not the other way around. The individual liberties protected in the Bill of Rights are essential for ensuring that our system of government is accountable to us. ***The individual liberties protected in the Bill of Rights are just as important today as they were when the Bill of Rights was first drafted.***

Sample Social Media

1st Amendment Tweets:

Thank you @JasonintheHouse for leading the effort to impeach #Koskinen!

Thank you @repdesantis for continuing to work the effort to impeach #Koskinen!

The #IRSScandal illustrates why we need more accountability in Washington! Stop #IRSA Abuse @tppatriots

It's time to impeach IRS Commissioner #Koskinen! #IRSA Abuse @tppatriots @jennybethm

For lying to Congress, #Koskinen must be impeached! #IRSA Abuse @Jasoninthehouse

For lying to Congress, #Koskinen must be impeached! @[INSERT YOUR CONGRESSMAN'S TWITTER ID HERE] #IRSA Abuse @tppatriots @jennybethm

It's time to impeach IRS Commissioner #Koskinen! @[INSERT YOUR CONGRESSMAN'S TWITTER HANDLE HERE] #IRSA Abuse @tppatriots @jennybethm

2nd Amendment Tweets:

The 2nd Amendment isn't open for debate. @[INSERT YOUR SENATOR'S TWITTER HANDLE HERE]

The Senate wants to erode 2nd Amendment. Which part of Bill of Rights will be next?

"...the right of the people, to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed." Understood? @[INSERT YOUR SENATOR'S TWITTER HANDLE HERE]

Talking Points on the Second Amendment

- Our right to bear arms is intrinsically linked to our liberty. In 1803, St. George Tucker wrote that the United States “may reasonably hope that the people will never cease to regard the right of keeping and bearing arms as the surest pledge of their liberty.”
- The Second Amendment guarantees the right to keep and bear arms – without any qualifications or limitations.
- Criminals will not be deterred from getting guns or committing heinous crimes just because new gun laws have been instituted. Criminals have no regard for the law.
- After each major shooting incident, the Left attempts to take gun rights away from law-abiding citizens. The proposed regulations, of course, would not prevent criminals or terrorists from obtaining and using guns.

How to Write a Letter to the Editor



What is a Letter to the Editor?

A letter to the editor is a letter written to the Editor of a newspaper. The letter is an opportunity for you to express your opinion about a recent article published in the paper or an issue in the news.

Writing letters to the editor is an important engagement tool for activists. They allow activists to do the following:

- 1) Reach a broader audience than you normally would have;
- 2) Hold your local journalists accountable;
- 3) Present alternative views on political issues.

Letters to the editor are usually found in the first section of the newspaper or on the editorial page.

Guidelines for Getting a Letter to the editor Published

Most newspapers publish guidelines with their specific requirements for getting a letter published, but here are some general rules that will help you get your letter to the editor published.

- * Include your name and address and a telephone number where you can be reached.
- * Be respectful and courteous, even when disagreeing with the Editorial Board about a specific issue.
- * Be specific. If you are opposed to Obamacare, mention the specific reasons why. Provide examples.
- * Cite your sources. If you include any quoted material, be sure to correctly cite your source or attribute the quote.
- * Use proper grammar. Spellcheck your letter and be sure to use proper grammar. Refer to *The Elements of Style* for a great overview of effective writing.
- * Be concise. Letters to the editor are much more likely to be published if they are 300 words or less. Make your point as clearly and concisely as possible.

Sample Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Back in 2013, Americans learned that the IRS – perhaps the most frightening of all government agencies – has been singling out and targeting conservative groups, including Tea Party groups. The IRS waged a four-year war against the Tea Party, harassing our groups and even auditing our individual members. This abuse of power is unacceptable and un-Constitutional, and it must stop.

The Tea Party movement began organically in 2009 in response to government excess. Since then, it has attracted millions of Americans. The Tea Party consists of individuals who are committed to defending the Constitution and teaching future generations about the importance of limited government and fiscal responsibility.

Since the IRS's abuse of power was revealed in 2013, Congress has been diligently investigating the crimes and wrongdoing. At every turn, however, the IRS officials have hampered the investigations, and have made a mockery of the process. Emails and computer services have allegedly vanished into thin air, as the IRS attempts to cover its trail.

The current commissioner of the IRS, John Koskinen, has been particularly obstinate throughout the Congressional investigations into the IRS's wrongdoing. For lying to the

public and for thwarting Congressional investigations, Mr. Koskinen should be impeached. Fortunately, Rep. Jason Chaffetz has introduced a resolution to impeach Mr. Koskinen. The resolution is the first step in the impeachment process, and Congressman Chaffetz should be applauded for his courage in this effort.

Impeachment of high-level officials who abuse power and obstruct justice ought to be impeached because it's the right thing to do, and it's the only way to restore the American public's trust in the federal government.

I urge readers of this paper to call [INSERT NAME OF YOUR HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE] and ask [him/her] to co-sponsor the impeachment resolution.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Your City

Sample Letter to Congress

The Honorable <<Congressman First>> <<Congressman Last>>
<<Congressman Office Building>>
Washington, DC <<Zip>>

DATE

Dear <<Mr. or Ms. CONGRESSMAN'S LAST>>>,

As you know, for years the IRS engaged in the systematic and deliberate targeting of conservatives, especially those identified with the Tea Party movement. The scandal became public in May of 2013, and in the ensuing two and half years, Congress has undertaken several thorough and exhaustive investigations, which have unearthed shocking details about the extent of the abuse of power at the IRS. At Tea Party Patriots, we applaud those efforts, and we are grateful for the tireless work the Committee staffers have put into the investigations. Throughout the investigations, IRS Commissioner John Koskinen has remained defiant and uncooperative. He has even gone so far as to lie under oath, present false and misleading testimony in hearings, and withhold key pieces of information.

In response to Mr. Koskinen's actions undermining the investigations, Oversight Committee Chairman Jason Chaffetz has introduced an impeachment resolution – H.Res. 494: Impeaching John Andrew Koskinen, Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service, for high crimes and misdemeanors. There are already 73 cosponsors who have joined Chairman

Chaffetz. As your constituent, I would like to encourage you to become a cosponsor of this legislation as well.

The IRS's targeting scandal had a chilling effect, silencing groups and forcing many organizations to discontinue their operations. Impeaching Mr. Koskinen and removing him from the IRS's top position is absolutely necessary for restoring the public's faith and confidence in the government. And that is why I am urging you to join the impeachment effort and add your name as a cosponsor.

I hope that you'll do everything in your power to expedite and continue the impeachment of John Koskinen.

Sincerely,

Tea Party Patriots' Letter to Rep. Roskam

April 28, 2016

The Honorable Peter Roskam
United States House of Representatives
2246 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Congressman Roskam,

On behalf of Tea Party Patriots supporters across the country, I write in support of your legislation, H.R. 5053, the "Preventing IRS Abuse and Protecting Free Speech Act." This bill would amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expressly prohibit the Secretary of the Treasury from requiring 501(c) tax-exempt nonprofit organizations to divulge the identities of their donors in their annual returns.

Last fall, Tea Party Patriots and numerous other organizations opposed the IRS's proposed plan to allow charitable organizations to substantiate donations by submitting a report to the IRS which would have included vast amounts of personal information about donors – most alarmingly, the Social Security numbers of donors. Tea Party Patriots organized a petition and drove comments to the IRS website in opposition to this proposal, and we

were pleased to see the IRS move away from that proposal.

The IRS has proven over the past several years a frightening level of incompetence combined with a disconcerting penchant for abusing its power and authority, particularly when given the private information of donors to certain causes. As the head of an organization that was itself targeted, and as the representative of hundreds of tea party and other conservative organizations that were targeted by IRS agents from 2009 to 2013, I understand first-hand the importance of scaling back the easy access IRS agents have to personal and sensitive information that can be (and certainly in the past has been) misused.

Besides the potential for abusive tactics at the IRS being employed again against the charities it chooses to target, there is also the very real likelihood that donors would reduce their giving levels once they understand that their Social Security number will be included with any gift transaction receipts. The United States is blessed with a charitable-giving sector that is unparalleled in the world and is truly one of the aspects that makes our country so fortunate. Churches, hospitals, schools, children's programs, and charities focused on helping military families are only some of the organizations that rely on charitable gifts. This robust part of our society is too valuable – and too distinctly American – to risk by handing over more power and invasive authority for an agency that has proven to have rogue intentions in the recent past.

H.B. 5053 would eliminate both the current Schedule B requirements and help stave off future encroachments into the charitable sector by an abusive agency.

Thank you for your commitment to protecting Americans' privacy, free speech, and our charitable-giving sector. We are pleased to support H.R. 5053 and encourage all Representatives to join on as cosponsors of this important piece of legislation.

In liberty,

Jenny Beth Martin



TEA PARTY

PATRIOTS

About Tea Party Patriots

Tea Party Patriots stands for every American, and is home to millions who have come together to pursue the American Dream and to keep that Dream alive for their children and grandchildren.

What unites the tea party movement is the same set of core principles that brought America together at its founding, that kindled the American Dream in the hearts of those who struggled to build our nation, and made the United States of America the greatest, most successful country in world history.

At its root the American Dream is about freedom. Freedom to work hard and the freedom to keep the fruits of your labor to use as you see fit without harming others and without hindering their freedom. Very simply, three guiding principles give rise to the freedom necessary to pursue and live the American Dream: Personal Freedom, Economic Freedom and a Debt-Free Future.