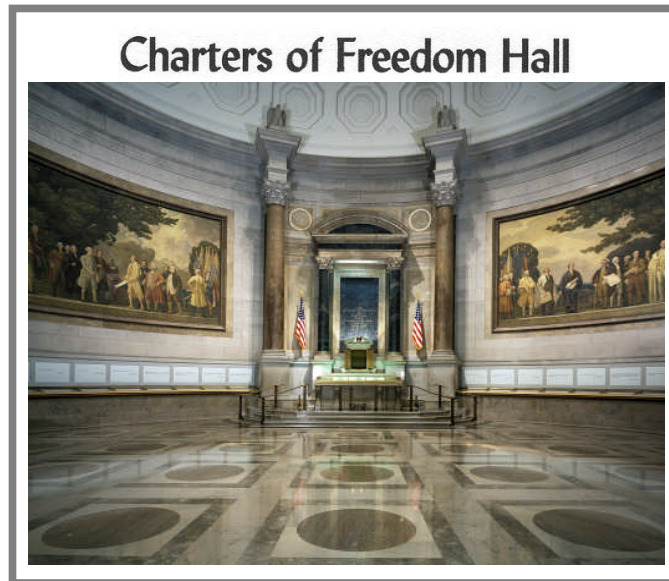


## Constitutional Prerogatives



History is an essential component of understanding of the evolution of human society, culture, people, and institutions. Three documents known as The Charters of Freedom -- The Declaration of Independence, The United States Constitution, and The Bill of Rights provide a rich insight into the founding principles of this nation of immigrants. These documents would define how the people of this nation wanted to be governed, why they feared tyranny, and why individual liberties and equality held such high importance.

Convention Delegates met in Philadelphia in 1787 to form what would later be called the Constitution. They faced several perplexing issues, from the list of grievances detailed in the Declaration of Independence, to congressional representation and the formation of institutions of governance. Knowing something about their motivations, compromises, vices and virtues, provides insight into the formation of this nation, and why an educated and participatory citizenry offer the best hope for present and future generations. The unity of purpose they established became a covenant, The Constitution of the United States of America. This was a contract between citizens and their government.

There are six basic principles upon which the Constitution was formed: all States would be equal; there shall be three branches of government; government is a government of laws, not men; all men are created equal before the law; people can change the authority of the government by amending the Constitution; and the Constitution shall be the supreme law of the land. It has endured and changed when citizens felt it important enough to do so, which has occurred only 27 times in the past 226 years.