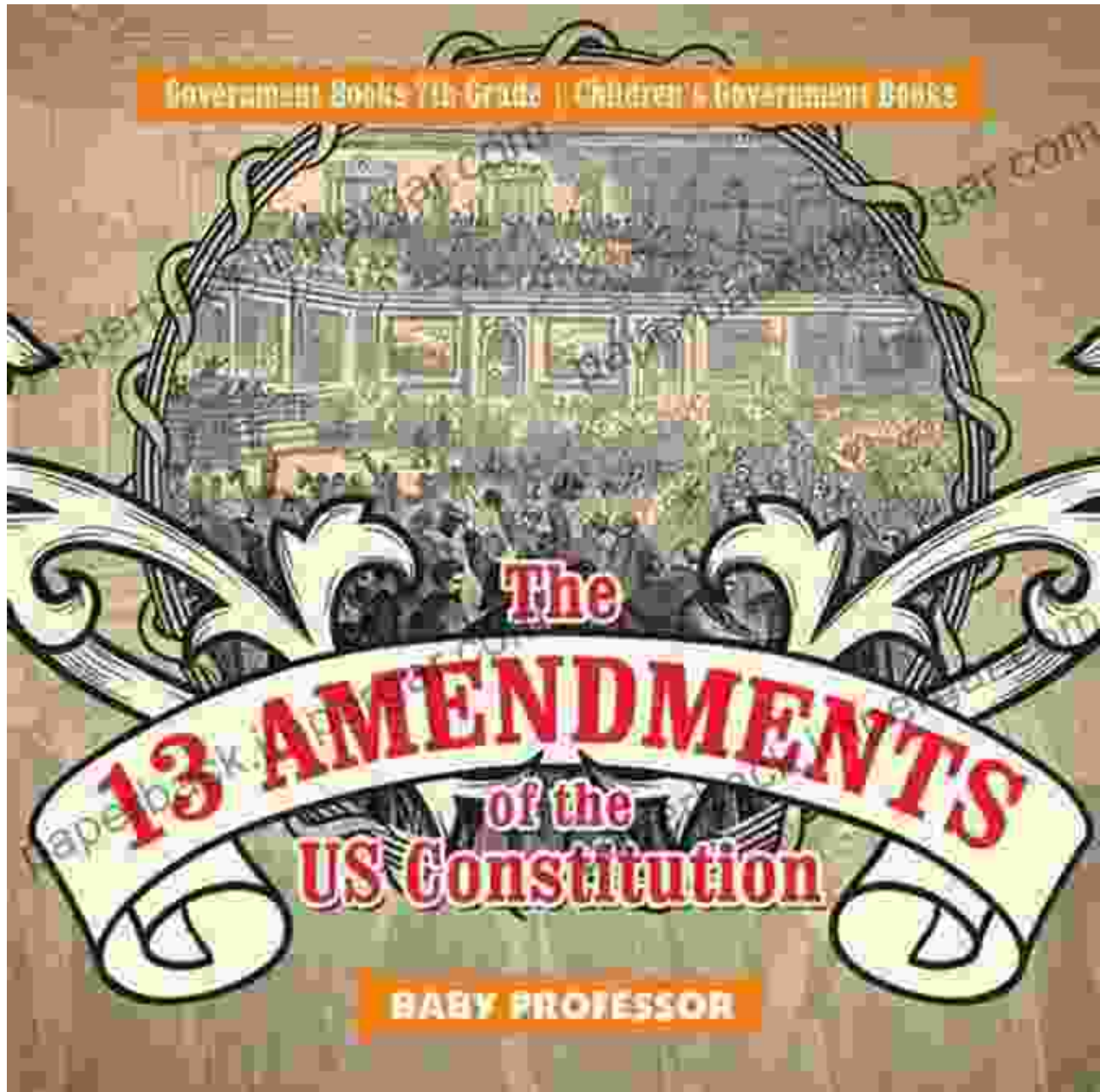


Governing by Amendment in the American States: A Comprehensive Guide to Constitutional Change



The American Constitution is a remarkable document that has served as the foundation of the United States government for over two centuries.

However, the Constitution is not a static document; it has been amended 27 times since its ratification in 1788. These amendments have had a profound impact on the American political system, shaping the relationship between the federal government and the states, protecting individual rights, and expanding the scope of government power.



State Constitutional Politics: Governing by Amendment in the American States

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 954 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 401 pages
Lending	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported



In the book *Governing by Amendment in the American States*, political scientists John Dinan and Thad Kousser provide a comprehensive overview of the constitutional amendment process in the American states. The book examines the history of constitutional amendments, the different types of amendments that have been proposed and adopted, and the impact of amendments on state politics and policy.

The History of Constitutional Amendments

The first constitutional amendments were proposed by the First Congress in 1789 and ratified by the states in 1791. These amendments, known as the Bill of Rights, protected individual rights such as freedom of speech,

religion, and the right to bear arms. Since then, the states have proposed and ratified over 11,000 constitutional amendments.

The pace of constitutional amendment has varied over time. There were relatively few amendments proposed and ratified in the 19th century, but the pace picked up in the 20th century. In the past 50 years, the states have proposed and ratified over 1,000 constitutional amendments.

The Different Types of Constitutional Amendments

There are two main types of constitutional amendments:

- **Literal amendments** change the text of the constitution. These amendments can be either substantive or procedural. Substantive amendments change the meaning of the constitution, while procedural amendments change the way the constitution is interpreted or enforced.
- **Delegated amendments** give the legislature the power to make changes to the constitution. These amendments are typically used to give the legislature the authority to implement a specific policy or to create a new state agency.

Literal amendments are the most common type of constitutional amendment. However, delegated amendments have become more popular in recent years. This is because delegated amendments allow the legislature to make changes to the constitution without having to go through the lengthy and difficult process of ratification by the states.

The Impact of Amendments on State Politics and Policy

Constitutional amendments can have a profound impact on state politics and policy. Amendments can change the structure of state government, create new rights for citizens, or limit the power of the government.

For example, the 17th Amendment, which was ratified in 1913, changed the way that U.S. senators are elected. Prior to the 17th Amendment, senators were elected by state legislatures. The 17th Amendment changed this system and allowed senators to be elected directly by the people.

The 19th Amendment, which was ratified in 1920, gave women the right to vote. This amendment had a major impact on American politics, as it increased the number of eligible voters by millions.

The 21st Amendment, which was ratified in 1933, repealed the 18th Amendment, which had prohibited the sale of alcohol. The 21st Amendment allowed states to regulate the sale of alcohol within their bFree Downloads.

Constitutional amendments are a powerful tool for changing the American political system. Amendments can protect individual rights, expand the scope of government power, or change the structure of state government. The book *Governing by Amendment in the American States* provides a comprehensive overview of the constitutional amendment process and the impact of amendments on state politics and policy. This book is an essential resource for anyone interested in the American political system.

About the Authors

John Dinan is a professor of political science at Wake Forest University. He is the author of several books on American politics, including *The*

American State Constitutional Tradition and Governing by Amendment in the American States.

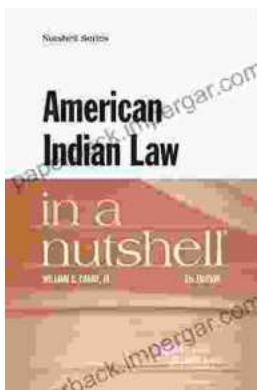
Thad Kousser is a professor of political science at the University of California, San Diego. He is the author of several books on American politics, including *The Shaping of American Constitutional Law* and *Governing by Amendment in the American States*.



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