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- Abstract:** James Madison, the fourth President of the U.S., then agreed to draft a bill of rights. He studied state constitutions for ideas. Madison also considered the suggestions made by states during the debates over the Constitution. In June 1789, Madison presented his proposed amendments to the U.S. House of Representatives. Many Anti-Federalists also opposed Madison's plan. For six weeks, Congress refused to consider Madison's amendments. Roger Sherman of Connecticut quickly asked for one change in Madison's plan. The House debated Madison's amendments through August. At the end of the month, it sent seventeen amendments to the U.S. Senate for its reaction. The senators combined some of the amendments and dropped one, leaving twelve. Then Senate and House members met to discuss them. Finally, on September 24, 1789, the House agreed to the final wording of the amendments and the Senate did the same the next day.
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Madison then agreed to draft a bill of rights. He studied state constitutions for ideas. He also considered the suggestions made by the states during the debates over the Constitution. In June 1789, Madison presented his proposed amendments to the House of Representatives. Madison said that a bill of rights was good for the "tranquility of the public mind, and the stability of the government."

Most Federalists still did not want a bill of rights. They believed most Americans liked the Constitution as it was. Why else had the states ratified it so quickly? The Federalists also thought Congress had more important issues to handle. The lawmakers still had to work out the details of running the new national government.

Surprisingly, many Anti-Federalists also opposed Madison's plan. They did not really want to add a bill of rights to the Constitution. Instead, they hoped to call a second Constitutional Convention for the nation. There, the Anti-Federalists planned to create a

new federal government with less control over the states. The Anti-Federalists lacked the power to put their plan into action, however.

For six weeks, Congress refused to consider Madison's amendments. Finally, in August, the House began to discuss them. Roger Sherman of Connecticut quickly asked for one change in Madison's plan. Madison wanted the amendments inserted into the Constitution at various places. Sherman insisted that they be added at the end. He and others did not want future Americans to think the amendments had been part of the original Constitution. Congress accepted Sherman's plan.

Madison's amendments included freedom of the press, the freedom to practice any religion, and the right to own guns. He proposed that anyone charged with a crime receive a fast, fair trial with a jury. One amendment also said that any powers not given to the federal government in the Constitution belonged to the states.

The House debated Madison's amendments through August. At the end of the month, it sent seventeen amendments to the Senate for its reaction. The senators combined some of the amendments and dropped one, leaving twelve. Then Senate and House members met to discuss them. Finally, on September 24, 1789, the House agreed to the final wording of the amendments and the Senate did the same the next day.

Not everyone was pleased with the final result. Senator William Grayson of Virginia wrote that the amendments "are good for nothing, and I believe, as many others do, that they will do more harm than benefit." But George Mason of Virginia said he "received much satisfaction from the amendments."

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By Michael Burgan

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