

Activating My Democracy

- MIDDLE SCHOOL -

LESSON
2

**This Is Right On So
Many Levels!**

How to understand
real wealth and
our liberties

ultimate
CIVICS



Activating My Democracy

Civics lessons and resources for grades 6–8
Third Edition, 2018

Explores how to: (1) Move ideas into action; (2) Understand values and liberties (3) Understand rights, privileges, and the balance of power; (4) Trace the historic roots of the democracy crisis in current events; (5) Repair a democracy and protect our liberties; and (6) Exercise our rights to defend what we love.

Empowers: Youth by nurturing self-efficacy and teaching skills and strategies to take control of their destiny.

Engages: Youth as change agents to define their roles as global citizens during a critical time in human history.

Special thanks to

ad hoc focus group of retired teachers of King County, WA
Sunnyside Environmental School grades 6–8 (2016)

Contributors

those able to pay it forward
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**"It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men."
~ Frederick Douglas**

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CIVICS**

This is right on so many levels!

Understanding wealth and our liberties

Rationale

The purpose of forming a limited government is to recognize and secure our cherished principles and values. It is up to the citizens of each generation to exercise our rights and to secure others, as needed, to maintain a limited government that derives “its just powers from consent of the governed” and to pass this government to our posterity.



The rights recognized and secured in the Bill of Rights and the concepts of limited government established in the Constitution, such as the balance of power, resulted in part from the Framers first-hand experience in dealing with the tyranny of the British monarchy and instruments of its oppression, in particular, the corporations holding royal charters.

Our nation has progressed in decades-long periods of popular movements to secure more rights in response to decades-long periods of abuse from government overstepping its limited powers and industry overreaching its privileges and powers.

We now find ourselves in one such cycle of abuse of powers that grew in response to the popular movements of the 1950s through 1970s. It is up to the citizens present at this time to exercise our rights and work together to protect our cherished ideals so that this government is truly one that is of the people, by the people, and for the people.

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. --That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed...”

~ Declaration of Independence



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For democracy to work, our individual work must be grounded in our core principles and values, because these are where we find common ground and commitment to work together. These are also the key to understanding our rights and using our rights responsibly. And these are the foundations of our dreams and hopes for our collective future.

It is incumbent on all its citizens to be able to articulate what we value, understand how our value-based liberties are – and become – enshrined as rights, and exercise our rights responsibly and often to protect our liberties and to maintain a limited government of, for, and by the people.

Enduring Understanding for Civics Grades 6-8*

- Ability to describe ideas and principles contained in founding documents of the United States, and explain how they influence the social and political system. (D2.Civ.8.)
- Explain the relevance of personal interests and perspectives, civic virtues, and democratic principles when people address issues and problems in government and civil society. (D2.Civ.10.)
- Ability to assess specific rules and laws as means of addressing public problems. (D2.Civ.12.)

** C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards*

<http://www.socialstudies.org/system/files/c3/C3-Framework-for-Social-Studies.pdf>

Essential Questions

- What is real wealth and wellbeing?
- What was the purpose of forming a democratic government?
- What are some of the key types of wealth protected in the Bill of Rights?

Learning Objectives

Students can:

- Describe the four types of real wealth and the basis of wellbeing.
- Understand and describe the purpose of forming a limited government.
- Explain key forms of wealth and concepts enshrined in the Bill of Rights.
- Describe how our rights are being used to address current issues.

RESOURCE

Constitution Center, interactive guide to amendments
<https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/amendments/>



This is right on so many levels!

Lesson 2

Students explore and articulate what they value, then examine how the value-based liberties and principles enshrined in the Declaration of Independence were moved into legal protections through the Bill of Rights. Using select current events, students learn how, and how well, our rights work to defend our wealth and wellbeing and to curb government and industry abuses of power.

Time

Approximately 50 minutes: Interactive exercises supported by films and power point slides.

Materials

- Power point notes and slides
- 1 pocket copy per student of the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution
- 1 single-sided, ½-sheet copy per student of ACTIVITY, “Values & Wealth”
- 1 single-sided, ½-sheet copy per student of ACTIVITY, “Understanding Wealth & Rights” (optional exit ticket)
- white board or piece of paper about 3 feet by 4 feet and 4 colors of marker pens
- 2 films
 - » *A 3-minute guide to the Bill of Rights* (TED Ed Lesson)
<http://ed.ted.com/lessons/a-3-minute-guide-to-the-bill-of-rights-belinda-stutzman>
 - » *Proclaim* with Ta’Kaiya Blaney, 2 minutes
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UmT2CJ2ssbs>

Preparation

- Review lesson materials: power point notes and slides, films, teacher guides and student activity sheets for exercises, and vocabulary
- Find and mark page number in your classroom’s pocket Constitutions for:
 - » slides 6–7, Declaration of Independence on page ____.
 - » slides 9–10, 1st and 2nd Amendments on page ____.
 - » slide 11, 4th Amendment on page ____.
 - » slide 12, 5th Amendment on page ____.
 - » slide 13, 6th–8th Amendments on pages ____.
 - » slide 14, 9th–10th Amendments on page ____.



- Download or cue films for viewing
 - » Slide 8 – *A 3-minute guide to the Bill of Rights* (Start 13 seconds in)
 - » Slide 15 – *Proclaim!*
- Arrange desks in groups of 4 to 6 students
- Place on each set of desks, pencils and ACTIVITY sheets, “Values & Wealth,” for students
- On white board or poster paper, where it will not be covered by the screen for the power point lesson make and title two columns as shown in slide 3; the “Type” column should be about 8 inches wide
- Clear white board behind screen where slides will be projected
- On a different part of the white board or poster paper write:
 - » Essential questions
 - What is real wealth and wellbeing?
 - What was the purpose of forming a democratic government?
 - What are some of the key types of wealth protected in the Bill of Rights?
 - » Vocabulary
 - economic wealth
 - environmental wealth
 - quality of life
 - political wealth
 - social wealth
 - wellbeing

“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.”
~ Eleanor Roosevelt



Power Point Notes

Lesson 2

1. Ultimate Civics! COVER SLIDE

Everyone has a story.

Suggested instruction for teacher

- ADD *your* 1-minute story to set this lesson about values and rights. Like this.

My call to action happened in 1989 when I flew over the wreck of the super tanker *Exxon Valdez*. Eleven to thirty-three million gallons of crude oil had spilled into the sea. As far as I could see, the waters of Prince William Sound in Alaska were covered with oil.

I thought, "This is too big. I'm only one person. How can I fix this?" Then, "I know enough to make a difference! *Do I care enough?*"

I thought about my friends and community. Most people in Cordova, Alaska, made their living from the sea. All of our lives were about to change dramatically. I decided yes, I cared enough. I would step up and work to fix this.

In this lesson, we will examine our own personal values and learn about some of our fundamental human rights.

We will learn how what we care about relates to creating and maintaining a democratic government.

Our essential questions are:

- What is real wealth and wellbeing?
- What was the purpose of forming a democratic government?

- What are some of the key types of wealth protected in the Bill of Rights?

2. Shared Values

To answer these questions, let's start by identifying our values.



Instructions for ACTIVITY Values & Wealth (Slides 2–3)

- Identifying individual values
 - » In the "Personal values" column of your ACTIVITY sheet, write things you like, what has worth or value to you, or what is useful or important to you.
 - » Work in silence for 3 minutes.
 - » Give students a "30 seconds left" notice.
- Identifying shared values
 - » Ask students to share a value.
 - » Write these on the white board or poster paper under the "Value" column. Ask students to share values that are not already listed.
 - » Write about 15 values.

3. Types of shared values

Let's see if the values on our shared list can be grouped into types.

- What things on this list have a sticker price? They cost money to buy? Or something of equal value to trade?
 - » Students identify values from list. Ask for explanation if it is not obvious.



- » In left column under “Type,” write a “\$” for economic wealth.

<CLICK>

These values represent “economic wealth.” Read definition from slide.

Economic wealth is the total of things with a sticker price; things that are owned, have value, and could be sold or bartered.

- What things on this list represent the environment or the natural world?
 - » Students identify values from list. Ask for explanation if it is not obvious.
 - » In left column under “Type,” write an “E” for environmental wealth in a different color marker pen.

<CLICK>

These values represent “environmental wealth.” Read definition from slide.

Environmental wealth is healthy ecosystems – all life and the natural habitat to support it.

- » Environmental wealth includes light, dark, air, water, soil, trees, rainbows, minerals, wildlife, stars and planets, and more.

Students should start to notice that values often fall into different types of wealth. Encourage this discussion.

- What things on this list represent things like trust, health, relationships, culture, knowledge, satisfaction or enjoyment – thing that don’t have a sticker price because they are priceless?
 - » Students identify values from list. Ask for explanation if it is not obvious.
 - » In left column under “Type,”

write an “S” for social wealth in a different color marker pen.

<CLICK>

These values represent “social wealth.” Read definition from slide.

Social wealth is things in demand but with no price like: trust, relationships, family, knowledge, health, culture, safety, friends. It is also peace of mind, happiness, enjoyment of art, music, sciences; i.e., priceless things.

- » Social wealth is the glue that holds a civil society together.
- » For example, friendships and marriages are based on trust. Barter or trade is built on trust.

<CLICK>

- What things on this list represent “political wealth” – rights that hold the space for fair treatment and opportunity for all?
 - » Students identify values from list. Ask for explanation if it is not obvious.
 - » In left column under “Type,” write a “P” for political wealth in a different color marker pen.

These values represent “political wealth.” Read definition from slide.

Political wealth is our inalienable rights – and the government and institutions that we create respecting our human rights.

Instructions



- After completing the shared list, ask students to take a minute to categorize their personal values.
- Turn to a partner and share your favorite values and the types of wealth they represent.
- Ask students to share as a class.



The point of this exercise is that our values are shared, complex, and interwoven.

4. When society reflects human values

When a society or culture reflects what people love and value, our types of wealth weave together to create a quality of life.

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Our personal “*wellbeing*” depends on all forms of wealth to create and maintain a state of health, happiness, and comfort.

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Our quality of life as a society *improves* when people – and the government and businesses we create – all work together to take care of our shared wealth.

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Protecting these forms of wealth are critical to the general welfare of society – the health, happiness, and comfort of everyone.

“A nation’s greatness is measured by how it treats its weakest members.”

~ Mahatma Ghandi

“Any society, any nation, is judged on the basis of how it treats its weakest members – the last, the least, the littlest.”

~ Cardinal Roger Mahony, 1998 letter, *Creating a Culture of Life*

5. Definitions and concepts

The Declaration of Independence recognizes key human values and wealth.

Before we read from the Declaration of Independence, let’s examine some vocabulary.

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- **Unalienable** means cannot be transferred or sold. The root word comes from the Latin *alienus*, meaning “of or belonging to another.”
 - » So a space “alien” belongs to another what? (planet or galaxy)

<CLICK>

- **Unalienable rights** are fundamental rights or natural rights – rights that people are born with. These rights that cannot be transferred, sold, or denied.
- **Liberty:** What does this mean?
 - » Ask students to define it. Most think it means “freedom.”
 - » Ask freedom from what?

<CLICK>

- Read definition: “freedom from government oppression on one’s way of life.”
 - » Allow discussion.

RESOURCE

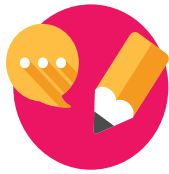
Do other natural beings have inalienable rights?

<http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/just-transition/corporations-have-legal-personhood-but-rivers-dont-that-could-change-20170912/whanganui-river-human-rights-new-zealand-maori.jpg/view>



6. Statement of principles

Instructions



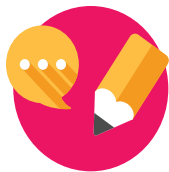
- Work at your tables: Find and read this sentence (on slide) in the Declaration of Independence on page ____.
- What are the Founders saying? Discuss the key principles.
- Identify the values and types of wealth.

Class discussion guide

- Key values
 - » equality
 - » inalienable rights like life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness
 - » “among these” – list of natural rights is not inclusive
- Types of wealth
 - » social wealth
 - » political wealth – liberty

7. Statement of purpose

Instructions



- Work at your tables: Read the next two clauses in the Declaration of Independence on page ____.
- Answer these two questions on the slide:
 - » What is the purpose of forming a government?
 - » What if a government “becomes destructive of these ends” or purposes? (2 things)

Class discussion guide

The main points are:

- Purpose of forming a government: to recognize and secure natural human rights

- Key concept: a democratic government derives its “just powers” from the people – from the consent of the governed
- Key concept: “Just powers” are only those powers that are given by the people, in the form of passing laws and making policies. The people rule, not the government.
- Right and responsibilities of its citizens if any government “... becomes destructive of these ends...”
 - » Abolish it AND try again.
 - » The “and” is important. Simply abolishing government without creating anew leads to anarchy. Social chaos happens when people don’t have or don’t recognize rules.

8. Bill of Rights overview

The Bill of Rights is the first 10 amendments to the Constitution. An “amendment” is an official rule change.

The Bill of Rights recognizes some of our inalienable rights and limits on the powers of federal government. The Bill of Rights is meant to provide protection against oppression by the federal government.

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After the Civil War, the 14th Amendment extended most of these rights to limit the powers of state governments as well. This was meant to provide people with protection against oppression by state governments.

It is an ongoing duty of citizens to make sure federal and state governments respect these rights – for everyone.

Any government violation of any of our liberties is a threat to all citizens and our democracy.

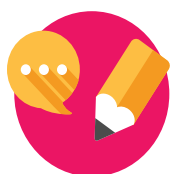


Let's watch a short film about the first official change to Constitution – the Bill of Rights amendments.



SHOW FILM

Let's explore these protected rights and see how they relate to current events.



9. 1st Amendment: Thought & expression

Instructions

- Turn to the Bill of Rights that starts on page ____.
- Ask students to work at the tables to read and identify *their five* protected rights in this amendment.
 - » After a couple minutes, ask students to share.

<CLICK>

- What 1st Amendment rights were these citizens using during the big Women's March on January 21, 2017?
 - » All of them.
 - » Explain your choices.
- Is it possible to protect any of our other inalienable rights if we don't have the 1st Amendment rights? Why or why not?

10. 2nd Amendment: Keep & bear arms

2nd Amendment rights are constantly being challenged. It is possible today for a citizen to purchase and possess a fully automatic military grade assault rifle – a far different weapon than the single-load muskets back when this amendment was written.



RESOURCES

Current case – First Amendment & redistricting

<https://www.theusconstitution.org/cases/gill-v-whitford-us-sup-ct>

Current case – First Amendment & Trump's travel ban

<https://www.theusconstitution.org/cases/international-refugee-assistance-project-v-trump-d-md-hawaii-v-trump-d-haw>

Current case – First Amendment & corporate rights

<https://www.theusconstitution.org/cases/masterpiece-cakeshop-ltd-v-colorado-civil-rights-commission-us-sup-ct>

<CLICK>

Instructions



- Turn to a partner. Read and discuss your protected 2nd Amendment rights.
 - » Where you would draw the line on gun control?
- Ask for students to explain their choice and get a balance of different perspectives.

The point is: Our rights are complicated and involve many perspectives.

11. 3rd & 4th Amendments: Secure in our homes and persons

The 3rd and 4th Amendments are about being secure in our homes, persons, and possessions. In particular, the 4th Amendment is about an individual's right to privacy.

In most cases, police need a “warrant” or order from a judge to conduct a search of private property. There are exceptions like when police believe that a crime has been committed.

<CLICK>

Instructions



- Read and discuss the 4th Amendment at your tables.
- » Describe what is protected in your own words. Give examples.

Class discussion guide

- Ask students to share.
- Then, consider: Electronic files and cell phones did not exist when this amendment was written. The U.S. Supreme Court decided a case about cell phone privacy in 2014.
- What do you think the Court decided? Should electronic files stored in cell

RESOURCES

Exceptions to the warrant requirement

https://nationalparalegal.edu/conLawCrimProc_Public/ProtectionFromSearches&Seizures/ExToWarrantReq.asp

U.S. Supreme Court, cell phone privacy
<http://www.scotusblog.com/2014/06/symposium-in-riley-v-california-a-unanimous-supreme-court-sets-out-fourth-amendment-for-digital-age/>

Current case – Cell phone privacy, Carpenter v. U.S.
<https://www.theusconstitution.org/cases/carpenter-v-united-states-us-sup-ct>

phones be protected under the 4th Amendment? Why or why not?

After discussion, share that an unanimous Supreme Court ruled search and seizure of digital contents of a cell phone without a warrant, even during an arrest, is unconstitutional. Read quote by Chief Justice Roberts.

“The fact that technology now allows an individual to carry such information in his hand does not make the information any less worthy of the protection for which the Founders fought.”

**~ Chief Justice Roberts in a unanimous Court
Riley v. California, 2014**

12. 5th Amendment: Right to just compensation

The 5th Amendment recognizes several “due process” rights that concern a fair legal treatment by the courts.

- What was one due process right mentioned in the film?
 - » Hint: I plead the 5th.
 - » This right to not testify against yourself in a trial is one part of a fair legal process.

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Another part currently in the news and courts is the right to just compensation.

Under the 5th Amendment, private property cannot be taken for public use without just compensation.

Royalty and governments reserve the right to seize or take private property for public use. This taking is called an “eminent domain seizure” or taking.



<CLICK>

This cartoon illustrates an example of a government eminent domain taking for a public highway expansion project. Under the 5th Amendment, the government must pay property owners fairly for their loss. That's just compensation.

Consider the forms of wealth that a home or family farm represents to the owners.

<CLICK>

Instructions



- Turn to a partner and answer the question on the slide: "How 'just' is just compensation?"
- After about 3 minutes, ask students to explain their answers.

The point is: Eminent domain takings are often very controversial, because the market price rarely reflects the full value of the property for the owners.

Governments can give the power of eminent domain to other authorized entities.

<CLICK>

Now say this is not a highway project. It's a private for-profit oil and gas company that has the power of eminent domain to seize private property to put in a pipeline.

<CLICK>

RESOURCE

Eminent domain seizures by for-profit companies
<https://thinkprogress.org/for-profit-pipelines-are-growing-and-so-are-eminent-domain-battles-2b8beee7af3c/>



Instructions



- Turn to a partner and answer the question: Should for-profit companies have power of eminent domain? Why or why not?
- After about 3 minutes, ask students to explain their answers.

13. 6th & 7th Amendments: Trial by jury

The 6th and 7th Amendments are about our legal system.

- What are the first several words of the 6th Amendment on page ____?
 - » "In a criminal prosecution..."
 - » The 6th is about protected rights in a criminal trial.
- What are the first several words of the 7th Amendment on page ____?
 - » "In suits at common law..."
 - » The 7th is about rights under common or civil law. This is used to settle disputes over private rights of citizens.

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The 8th Amendment is about preventing cruel and unusual punishment. While this amendment is a good principle, it has proven harder in practice. As the film stated, people really have not agreed on what exactly cruel and unusual means – for over 200 years!

14. 9th & 10th Amendments: Natural rights

The 9th & 10th Amendments were called "non-rights" in the film, but let's call them "natural rights" – just like the other unalienable human rights.

Instructions



- Turn to a partner and read the 9th and 10th Amendments on page ____.
- Describe in your own words how these amendments are meant to limit the power of government.

Class discussion guide

9th Amendment

- Translation: People may claim other rights not listed in the Constitution.
- Reserves powers for the people to claim new rights.

As times change, needs change. As new needs arise for protection against government abuses of power, the 9th Amendment gives citizens power to claim new protections.

But the Supreme Court has to recognize the rights – and the Court takes this duty seriously.

For example, in 2015, the Supreme Court recognized the new right to same-sex marriages and Justice Kennedy wrote:

<CLICK>

“The identification and protection of fundamental rights is an enduring part of the judicial duty to interpret the Constitution.”

RESOURCES

Ninth Amendment – Kids’ Law
<https://kids.laws.com/ninth-amendment>

Right to same sex marriages
family.findlaw.com/marriage/same-sex-marriage-understanding-obergefell-v-hodges.html

10th Amendment

- Translation: Reserves powers that have not been given to federal government by the Constitution to the states.
- Gives non-reserved powers to States.

The 10th Amendment is what gives States “*police powers*” – the power to establish and enforce laws protecting the welfare, safety, and health of the people.

- What constitutional amendment gives people protection against state police powers?
» 14th Amendment

We will learn more about the 14th Amendment and other rule changes to the Constitution in our next lessons.

15. Defending human wealth & wellbeing with rights

When people feel threatened by government abuses of power, people use their rights to defend what they love.

Here’s one example from Idle No More, a movement to honor Indigenous sovereignty and to protect the land and water.

As we watch this 2-minute film, listen for core values and rights. Be prepared to write and share what you heard.



SHOW FILM

Instructions



- Take a minute to write some of the types of wealth or rights that you heard on your ACTIVITY sheet, “Values & Wealth.”
- Ask class: What are some of the values or rights that you heard?



Teachers' guide for wealth

Land, homes, food, medicine, history, culture, wellbeing, way of life, healing, identity, our future, right to choose future, children, generations to come, water, diversity

Teacher's guide for rights

- inalienable rights in World Proclamation of 1763
- sovereign rights in U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- come together in one canoe – right to assemble peacefully
- joining voices – right to speak
- Turn to another person and take turns comparing the personal values on your ACTIVITY sheet with those expressed by Ta'Kayia.
- Ask class for observations.

People protest when the government is threatening their lives, liberties, and wellbeing.

Maybe people exercising their 1st Amendment rights are not the problem. Maybe it's the government.

We'll look at this possibility in our next lesson.

Instructions

Teachers may choose to hand out and collect optional exit tickets for ACTIVITY, "Understanding Wealth & Rights."

17. *Ultimate Civics!* COVER SLIDE

RESOURCES

Idle No More <http://www.idlenomore.ca/>

Native Children's Survival
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9tTdy4OnQs>

World Proclamation of 1763 – a cornerstone of Native American law in North America
<http://www.history.com/topics/native-american-history/1763-proclamation-of>

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous (UNDRIP) – eliminating human rights violations
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IPeoples/Pages/Declaration.aspx>



Vocabulary

Core Vocabulary

amendment: an official rule change made to a constitution, law, contract, or other legal document

economic wealth: total of things with a sticker price; things that are owned, have value, and could be sold or bartered

environmental wealth: healthy ecosystems; all life and the natural environment to support it

quality of life: general wellbeing of individuals and societies

political wealth: inalienable rights and having these rights respected by government and institutions that people create

social wealth: things in demand, but priceless like health, trust, relationships, family, friends, culture, safety, peace of mind, happiness

wellbeing: the state of being healthy, happy, and comfortable

Support Vocabulary

amendment: an official rule change made to a constitution, law, contract, or other legal document

due process: a fair legal process

eminent domain: the power of government to take private property for public use

enumerate: list

just compensation: fair payment for loss of value or property after an eminent domain seizure or “taking”

liberty: freedom from government oppression on one’s way of life, behavior, or political views

proclamation: a declaration that carries the force of law

taking: eminent domain seizure

unalienable/ inalienable right: a fundamental or natural human right that cannot be transferred or sold, or denied, because a person is born with them

