

NEWS RELEASE

Arizona Supreme Court
Administrative Office of the Courts



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A Message from Chief Justice Robert Brutinel

PHOENIX – December 15, 2020 is the 229th anniversary of the 1791 ratification of the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights—the first ten amendments to the United States Constitution—include basic and fundamental rights such as freedom of speech and religion, the protection against unreasonable searches and seizures, and the right to trial by jury.

This year, the right to trial by jury has been at the forefront of discussions between the courts, legal advocates, and the public. Balancing defendants’ and victims’ rights with the safest approaches to holding jury trials during a public health emergency has been a unique challenge. With input and participation from hundreds of Arizonans, the courts are working to maintain this centuries-old right in a safe and timely manner.

This year has brought challenges for schools and families, who are learning to adapt their educational needs to the times and environment. One thing students and teachers can do is to read the Bill of Rights. Those in the Phoenix area can visit the Bill of Rights monument in the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza, between the State Capitol and the State Courts Building. On the internet, the federal courts have civic education materials and lesson plans posted online at www.uscourts.gov. Another fascinating and instructional resource is the [Interactive Constitution](#) available through the National Constitution Center at www.constitutioncenter.org.

In whatever form each citizen, family, and school chooses, the 229th anniversary of the ratification of the Bill of Rights is a great opportunity to consider and appreciate the fundamental freedoms shared by all Americans.

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