SS.7.C.1.8 Benchmark Clarification 3: Students will recognize the Anti-Federalists’ reasons for the inclusion of a bill of rights in the U.S. Constitution.

Most importantly, the Anti-Federalists thought it was important for the Constitution to include a bill of rights. This listing of specific rights protecting the speech, property and religious expression of the people, among many other rights, would protect the people from the federal government abusing its power. The way that the British treated the colonists before they declared independence was fresh in their minds and many Americans felt that a specific listing of rights was needed.

The Constitution was eventually ratified by all of the states. Soon after ratification, Congress and the states also ratified the Bill of Rights. This compromise allowed the Federalists to get the Constitution ratified while also respecting the Anti-Federalist belief that to ensure that the protection of the rights of the people the Constitution needed a Bill of Rights.

- **Anti-Federalists** - a group of people in the early United States who opposed ratification of the U.S. Constitution because they feared a strong national government and a lack of protection for individual rights
- **Bill of Rights** - the first ten amendments of the U.S. Constitution
- **Federalists** - a group of people in the early United States who favored the establishment of a strong national government and who worked for ratification of the U.S. Constitution
- **ratification** - the process of formally approving something; ratification of the U.S. Constitution
- **ratify** - to confirm by expressing consent, approval, or formal sanction