

GLOSSARY

Note that spelling in early documents was not standard.

John Adams Letter 1776

conducive – making a certain situation or outcome possible

criterion – a standard used to make decisions

felicity – intense happiness

prerogative – a privilege or a power that someone has

sentiment – a view or attitude toward a situation or event; an opinion

virtue – the quality of being morally good

1776 State Constitution

abject – the state of being extremely unhappy, poor, unsuccessful, etc.

absolve – set or declare (someone) free from blame, guilt, or responsibility

accounted/able – to be responsible for a specific set of tasks

anarchy – absence of government, usually causing disorder

denominate – call; name

fleet – a group of ships sailing together, engaged in the same activity, or under the same ownership

jurisdiction – the official power to make legal decisions and judgments

premises – what a document is about

pretence – a claim, especially a false one

ratify – sign or give formal consent

reciprocal – given, felt, or done in return

sedition – act in a way that persuades others to rebel against authority

tenements – a building occupied by more residences than its design

thereto – to that place, thing, matter, circumstance

“to wit” – something comes to mind—often used to give examples

1776 Declaration of Rights

bulwark – a strong support or protection

compel – force someone to do something

dictate – an order given with authority or power

derive – to take or receive something from a specific source

distinct – recognizably different in nature from something else

duty – a tax

fundamental – of central importance

impost – a tax or some other money collected by the government

monopoly – one company’s full control of the supply or trade of a good or service

1971 Declaration of Rights

adjudication – a formal judgment on a disputed matter

contravention – an action that violates a law, treaty, or other ruling

dictate – an order or principle that must be obeyed

disposition – the final result or outcome of a court case

emoluments – a salary, fee, or profit from employment or office

eminent domain – the right of a government to take private property for public use, with payment of compensation

enumeration – the act of naming things separately, one by one

grievances – a complaint or concern

impeachment – the action of calling into question the integrity or validity of something

indictment – a formal charge or accusation of a serious crime

presentment – an official, written accusation of a crime

inherent – belonging to the basic nature of someone or something

injurious – causing or likely to cause damage or harm

inviolable – never to be broken

ordinance – a law or regulation especially of a city or town

pursuance – the carrying out of a plan or action

redress – to set right or makeup for

subversion – an attempt to overthrow or undermine a government

ex post facto – retroactive



1835 Amendments

aspersion – statement that could hurt someone's reputation

debate – formal way to share opposing viewpoints

delegates – political representatives

democratic – decided by the people

emancipation – the act of freeing from slavery

freehold – ownership of property

ideals – a standard of perfection to guide actions

inhabitants – people who live within a certain place

possess - own

preceding – came before

purge – get rid of

revolt – uprising; fight against something more powerful

statesman – political leader

1868 State Constitution

affirm – state something as true

allegiance – commitment; loyalty

deem – see as; consider

deploy – send out people, normally for a military purpose

duly - rightfully

establish – create

henceforth – from here on out

impeach – charge a public official with a crime

naturalize – go through the process of making someone a citizen

ordain – make official

posterity – future well-being

preamble – introduction

pretext – circumstances

prohibited - banned

secede – remove; stop being a part of something

servitude – the state of working under someone else's complete control

sever – remove; break apart

solemn – serious; formal

sovereign – someone that has total power, normally in politics

suppress – lessen; minimize; put down

statesman – political leader

1901 Amendment

allude – to hint at something
1901 Amendment Regarding Suffrage

catalogue – list and describe

complied – followed the rules

descendant – person related to older generations, like a grandson to a grandfather

disenfranchise – remove someone's right to vote

disrepute – seen in a negative light

earnestness – energetic and sincere effort

entitled – empowered; allowed

exalted – elevated; of high rank

favor – support; prefer

handicraft – craftsmanship; something is made with someone's skill

illiterate – unable to read

immortal – can live forever

industrious – hardworking; productive

inflict – do something, usually something negative or painful

lineal – directly related through generations, like a son to a father

native – born in or into

predecessor – something that came before something else

prescribed – directions issued by an authority

proposes – suggests; aims

1903 North Carolina Constitutional Reader

accommodations – supplies; things given

imposed – forced onto

indolent – lazy; useless

interpret – make sense of

nought – nothing; zero

principal – main; primary

reform – change for the better

registrar – person in charge of keeping official records

vulgarity – something improper or inappropriate

1946 Amendment

emoluments – a salary, fee, or profit from employment or office

endowed – empowered; supported

inalienable – cannot be taken away

self-evident – obvious; a natural right

1920 Women's Suffrage

avowed – strongly stated publicly; proclaimed

annul – cancel or void

antisuffragist – a person against equal voting rights

beckons - encourages

carpetbaggers – people who come from elsewhere for political or financial gain

commensurate – equal; in proportion

default – failure to complete a promised action

felony – a serious crime

forge – to fake a signature

fourfold/twofold – multiple (4 or 2) efforts

franchise – right to vote

handsome – impressive; large

heed – pay attention to; mind

importunities – frequent and annoying reminders

jeopardize – risk; threaten

modus operandi – well established way of acting

obdurately – stubbornly; pig-headedly

obstructionist – someone who blocks progress

prejudice – unfair thinking

siren – mythical creature that could lure sailors to their death by singing a song

sovereign states – self-governing states

spirited – active; inspired

suffrage – the right to vote

suffragist – a person advocating for equal voting rights

symbolism – when something is used to represent something else of greater meaning

wiles – tricky ways