



The Ohio and U.S. Constitutions Video Transcript

You might know about the U.S. Constitution but did you know that Ohio has its own constitution? *Every state does!*

I'm a law professor and I teach students about the Ohio constitution – the unsung hero of your rights.

State constitutions are critical to our democracy, but most people don't know much about them.

For instance, you probably know about the Bill of Rights — the first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution.

So when people mention their “First Amendment” or “Second Amendment” rights, you know they're talking about the freedom of speech or the right to bear arms.

But the U.S. Constitution doesn't come anywhere close to summarizing **all** of our rights.

That's because it's a **floor**, not a ceiling, for our fundamental rights. It provides a national baseline of protection, leaving states free to go further.

Under the state constitution we're often provided with **more** protection for those **same** rights and, sometimes, even some **other** rights.

Here's an example.

The Ohio Constitution protects the rights of conscience, reproductive freedom, and an education — none of these are even *mentioned* in the U.S. Constitution.

And while the U.S. Constitution protects religious freedom, private property and jury trials – you get **more** protection for those same things in Ohio.

State constitutions can also recognize broader rights to participate in political life.

Like in Ohio, we get to vote on every amendment to the state constitution **and** we elect the judges who interpret it. The same is *not* true for the U.S. Constitution.

The U.S. and state constitutions work **together** to protect our rights.

So, even if you don't know them by number, learning about your rights under the state constitution is **just** as important as learning about your federal rights!

And you can keep learning about the two constitutions at **MyOhioRights.com**.

