Beyond the Bill of Rights

Directions: Read the excerpt that you received on the historical backgrounds for two Constitutional Amendments Beyond the Bill of Rights. You may use a text or review book for additional information as well (if needed). Next, be prepared to share your findings with the class and document each Amendment in the space provided below.

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13th Amendment (1865) – Abolition of Slavery

- **Historical reasons:** Slavery as an institution contributes to the civil war. North – abolitionist. South – Pro-slave. Emancipation Proclamation (1863) – Reconstruction – North won the civil war.
- **How it brought about change to the government and/or American society** African Americans were now free. Southern lifestyle changed. Plantation owners had to pay for labor – sharecropping/tenant farming.

14th Amendment (1868) – Rights of Citizens/Equal protection under the law

- **Historical reasons:** Once freedom was granted, African Americans became U.S. citizens. Equal protection under the law.
- **How it brought about change to the government and/or American society** Although ‘equal protection’ was granted the Supreme court ruled that separate can be equal (Plessy v. Ferguson). Supposed to grant equality but leads to segregation.

15th Amendment (1870) – Right to Vote – Race/Servitude

- **Historical reasons:** Voting rights for freed slaves – males over 21. Why? Radical Republicans wanted civil rights passed for freedom – President Johnson did not.
- **How it brought about change to the government and/or American society** Although freed men were allowed to vote, many obstacles prevented them. Ex: KKK, poll taxes, literacy tests, grandfather clause.
18th Amendment (1919) – Prohibition of Intoxicating Liquors

- **Historical reasons:** Gambling, prostitution, public drunkenness, family issues and alcoholism.
  - Temperance Movement – women led the movement
  - Historical – WWI – to preserve grain (to send food overseas)

- **How it brought about change to the government and/or American society** 1920 – illegal smuggling, speakeasies, development of organized crime (Al Capone). It is later repealed by the 21st Amendment (1933).

19th Amendment (1920) – Women’s Suffrage

- **Historical reasons:** Women had been fighting for suffrage since the birth of the country. Seneca Falls Convention. Many western states granted the right to vote by 1900. (Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Mott).

- **How it brought about change to the government and/or American society** 1920’s – Roll of women changed (Flappers), Hillary Clinton.

22nd Amendment (1951) – Presidential Tenure / Two Term Limit

- **Historical reasons:** Washington established 2 term limit Presidency. FDR was elected for 4 terms (died in the 4th). Why re-elected? The Great Depression into WWII, the people did not want change and felt that FDR would continue to stabilize the US.

- **How it brought about change to the government and/or American society** Brings about constant change in our leadership. No one person in control for a long period of time. Presidents that served 2 terms: Reagan, Clinton, Bush

24th Amendment (1964) – Elimination of Poll Taxes

- **Historical reasons:** Since Reconstruction, attempts have been made to prevent African Americans from voting. Obstacles – KKK, literacy tests, grandfather clause, poll taxes.

- **How it brought about change to the government and/or American society** Voting among African Americans increased. Approximately 100 years of voting injustices was corrected. Voting rights Act of 1965, eliminated literacy tests.

26th Amendment (1971) – Right to Vote – Age/ 18 years of Age

- **Historical reasons:** Vietnam War 18 – 20 year olds were being drafted but couldn’t vote in elections. Vietnam protests among young people.

- **How it brought about change to the government and/or American society** Increased political involvement of 18 – 20 year olds. Questioning effectiveness of draft.