Celebrate the 225th Anniversary of the Bill of Rights at the National Constitution Center on Thursday, December 15, 2016

Bill of Rights Day features discounted admission and the Constitution Center’s back-by-popular-demand book festival

Philadelphia, PA (December 7, 2016) – On Thursday, December 15, 2016 the National Constitution Center will celebrate the 225th anniversary of the ratification of the Bill of Rights with $5 admission courtesy of Macy’s. Featured activities include a public reading of the Constitution’s first ten amendments, a Bill of Rights birthday cake, a special appearance by “James Madison,” and more. Visitors can also view a rare, original copy of the historic Bill of Rights and learn more about the document through interactive games and workshops.

On Bill of Rights Day, the National Constitution Center will also host the annual Bill of Rights Day Book Festival featuring four back-to-back discussions on today’s biggest constitutional debates, including gun control, the death penalty and the constitutional issues in today’s headlines. Authors include David Keene, former president of the National Rifle Association, and acclaimed constitutional expert Akhil Reed Amar, among others. Please see the full timeline of events below.

Bill of Rights Day Book Festival
The Bill of Rights Day Book Festival, which takes place in the National Constitution Center’s F.M. Kirby Auditorium, is included with museum admission and free for members. Reservations are recommended and can be made by calling 215-409-6700 or by visiting constitutioncenter.org/debate. Authors’ books will be available for sale.

Preserving and Protecting America’s Founding Documents
10 – 11 a.m.
What happens when priceless artifacts are threatened by theft or damage? How have copies of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and more survived through the years? Stephen Puleo, author of American Treasures, and Nancy Moses, author of Stolen, Smuggled, Sold, share the little-known stories behind the efforts to preserve humanity’s cultural heritage. Charles Cullen, interim president and CEO of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, moderates.

Is the Second Amendment Under Assault?
11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.
David Keene, former president of the National Rifle Association and co-author of Shall Not Be Infringed, provides his take on the history of the gun control debate in America — including the battles fought in the courts, the media, and even the United Nations. Tom Donnelly, senior fellow in constitutional studies at the National Constitution Center, moderates.
The Death Penalty and the Constitution
1:15 – 2:15 p.m.
Does the death penalty violate the Constitution? John Bessler, editor of Against the Death Penalty (by Stephen Breyer) and Carol Steiker and Jordan Steiker, authors of Courting Death: The Supreme Court and Capital Punishment, trace the unusual history of judicial regulation of capital punishment and offer their take on whether or not the death penalty violates the U.S. Constitution. Michael Gerhardt, scholar-in-residence at the National Constitution Center, moderates.

The Constitution Today: Timeless Lessons for the Issues of Our Era
2:30 – 3:30 p.m.
Leading legal scholar Akhil Reed Amar addresses the biggest and most bitterly contested debates of the last two decades and provides a passionate handbook for thinking constitutionally about today’s headlines as described in his forthcoming book, The Constitution Today. Jeffrey Rosen, president and CEO of the National Constitution Center, moderates.

Bill of Rights Day Museum Programs
Public Reading of the Bill of Rights
11 a.m.
“Father of the Constitution” James Madison leads a group reading of the ten amendments that make up our Constitution’s Bill of Rights.

Kids Town Hall with James Madison
11:30 a.m.
Visitors can participate in an educational question and answer session with James Madison, Constitutional Convention delegate, author of the Bill of Rights, and former president of the United States (portrayed by actor Kyle Jenks).

Bill of Rights Birthday Party
12:30 p.m.
Visitors can sing “Happy Birthday” and enjoy some birthday cake as the museum celebrates the anniversary of the ratification of the Bill of Rights.

Bill of Rights Day Museum Tours
11 a.m. and 1 p.m.
Visitors can experience special Bill of Rights tours of the National Constitution Center’s signature exhibits, including Signers’ Hall, The Story of We the People exhibit, and learn about some of the most famous Bill of Rights-related court cases.

Preamble Scramble and Amendment Match-Up
All Day
Visitors can make arts and craft projects, solve puzzles, and participate in a live game show-style challenge to place the segments of the Constitution’s preamble in the correct order and match up the right freedoms with the correct amendments.

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Bill of Rights Day 2016

Bill of Rights Show
All Day
Who wants to be a “Bill-ionaire?” In the Center’s fast-paced game show, visitors test their Bill of Rights knowledge.

About the National Constitution Center
The National Constitution Center in Philadelphia inspires citizenship as the only place where people across America and around the world can come together to learn about, debate, and celebrate the greatest vision of human freedom in history, the U.S. Constitution. A private, nonprofit organization, the Center serves as America’s leading platform for constitutional education and debate, fulfilling its Congressional charter “to disseminate information about the U.S. Constitution on a nonpartisan basis.”

As the Museum of We the People, the Center brings the Constitution to life for visitors of all ages through interactive programs and exhibits. As America’s Town Hall, the Center brings the leading conservative and liberal thought leaders together to debate the Constitution on all media platforms. As a center for Civic Education, the Center delivers the best educational programs and online resources that inspire, excite, and engage citizens about the U.S. Constitution. For more information, call 215-409-6700 or visit constitutioncenter.org.

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