

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Fair Voting for All

The Twenty-Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution is like a shield against unfair voting practices. It was ratified in 1964 to abolish the poll tax, ensuring that all citizens could freely exercise their right to vote without facing financial barriers.

Before the Twenty-Fourth Amendment, some states required voters to pay a poll tax as a prerequisite for voting in federal elections. This tax, which varied in amount, had the effect of disenfranchising low-income individuals, particularly African Americans and other marginalized groups.

The poll tax was used as a tool of discrimination, preventing many citizens from participating in the democratic process simply because they could not afford to pay the tax. This practice undermined the principles of equality and fairness upon which the American system of government is founded.

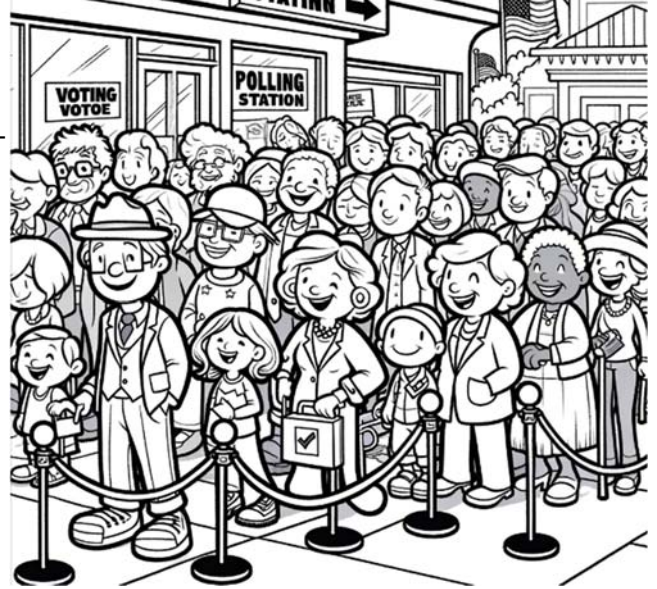
The movement to abolish the poll tax gained momentum during the civil rights era, as activists and lawmakers called for an end to discriminatory voting practices. The poll tax was seen as a barrier to full participation in democracy, and its elimination became a key priority for advocates of voting rights.

In 1962, the Supreme Court ruled in the landmark case of *Harper v. Virginia Board of Elections* that poll taxes in state elections were unconstitutional under the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. This decision paved the way for efforts to abolish the poll tax at the federal level.

The Twenty-Fourth Amendment was proposed by Congress in 1962 and ratified by the states in 1964. It states: "The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax."

The ratification of the Twenty-Fourth Amendment was a significant victory for voting rights and civil rights in America. It ensured that no citizen could be denied the right to vote based on their ability to pay a tax, reaffirming the principle of equal access to the ballot box for all.

In conclusion, the Twenty-Fourth Amendment stands as a beacon of democracy, protecting the right to vote from unjust financial barriers and advancing the cause of equality in American elections.



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### Multiple Choice Questions

1. What did the Twenty-Fourth Amendment abolish?
  - A) Property ownership requirements for voting
  - B) The Electoral College
  - C) The poll tax
  - D) Voter registration
2. Why was the poll tax considered discriminatory?
  - A) It required voters to pass a literacy test
  - B) It prevented low-income individuals from voting
  - C) It only applied to certain racial groups
  - D) It required voters to own property
3. When was the Twenty-Fourth Amendment ratified?
  - A) 1865
  - B) 1920
  - C) 1962
  - D) 1964
4. What was the significance of the Harper v. Virginia Board of Elections case?
  - A) It upheld the constitutionality of the poll tax
  - B) It declared the poll tax unconstitutional in state elections
  - C) It expanded voting rights for women
  - D) It abolished the Electoral College
5. What principle does the Twenty-Fourth Amendment reaffirm?
  - A) The principle of equal access to the ballot box
  - B) The right to bear arms
  - C) The separation of powers
  - D) The right to a fair trial