

Activity 2**Document-Based Activity****Debating the Constitution****DOCUMENT 5**

Before You Read The following word in the second document below may be new to you: *abated*. You may want to use a dictionary to look it up.

Before we establish a government, whose acts will be THE SUPREME LAW OF THE LAND, and whose power will extend to almost every case without exception, we ought carefully to guard ourselves by a BILL OF RIGHTS, against the invasion of those liberties which it is essential for us to retain, which it is of no real use to government to strip us of; but which in the course of human events have been too often insulted.

—An Old Whig
Essay IV, October 27, 1787
Independent Gazetteer, Philadelphia

Yesterday our Assembly were to meet and I suppose they will be able to make a House next week. It is expected by the Anti-Federalist Party that very extensive Petitions will be laid before them against the new Constitution. I however think they have abated very much in their Warmth since they see Massachusetts have come into it . . . And they at last say they think amendments will probably be made. I sincerely hope they will, as it would be a means of reconciling all Party's, and enable us to carry it through; Without them, the opposition will be so powerful as to clog its execution in too great a degree.

—Walter Stewart, Philadelphia merchant
Letter to fellow Pennsylvanian William Irvine
on efforts by some in the Pennsylvania state assembly
to overturn Pennsylvania's ratification of the Constitution
February 20, 1788

1. What is the position of each writer about a Bill of Rights?

2. Massachusetts ratified the Constitution on February 6, 1788. According to Walter Stewart, how did this affect the situation in Pennsylvania?
