**Passed** by Congress May 13, 1912, and **ratified** April 8, 1913, the 17th **amendment** modified Article I, section 3, of the Constitution by allowing voters to cast direct votes for U.S. Senators. Prior to its passage, Senators were chosen by state legislatures.

<http://www.google.com/search?q=why+was+amendment+17+created&oq=why+amendment+17&gs_l=serp.1.0.0i7i30l5j0i8i30l5.7518.8243.0.10723.4.4.0.0.0.0.144.378.2j2.4.0.msedr...0...1c.1.60.serp..0.4.370.ejbg3j4lhT4>

During the 1890s, the House of Representatives passed several resolutions proposing a constitutional amendment for the direct election of senators.

Americans did not directly vote for senators for the first 125 years of the Federal Government. The Constitution, as it was adopted in 1788, stated that senators would be elected by state legislatures. The first proposal to amend the Constitution to elect senators by popular vote was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1826, but the idea did not gain considerable support until the late 19th century when several problems related to Senate elections had become evident.

<http://www.archives.gov/legislative/features/17th-amendment/>

One of the most common critiques of the [Framers](http://www.usconstitution.net/constframe.html) is that the government that they created was, in many ways, undemocratic. There is little doubt of this, and it is so by design. The [Electoral College](http://www.usconstitution.net/consttop_elec.html), by which we choose our President, is one example. The appointment of judges is another. And the selection of Senators not by the people but by the state legislatures, is yet another. The Senatorial selection system eventually became fraught with problems, with consecutive state legislatures sending different Senators to Congress, forcing the Senate to work out who was the qualified candidate, or with the selection system being corrupted by bribery and corruption. In several states, the selection of Senators was left up to the people in referenda, where the legislature approved the people's choice and sent him or her to the Senate. Articles written by early 20th-century muckrakers also provided grist for the popular-election mill.

The [17th Amendment](http://www.usconstitution.net/xconst_Am17.html) did away with all the ambiguity with a simple premise — the Senators would be chosen by the people, just as Representatives are. Of course, since the candidates now had to cater to hundreds of thousands, or millions, of people instead of just a few hundred, other issues, such as campaign finances, were introduced. The 17th is not a panacea, but it brings government closer to the people. The Amendment was passed by Congress on May 13, 1912, and was ratified on April 8, 1913 (330 days).

<http://www.usconstitution.net/constamnotes.html>

**Senators** belong to the legislative branch of the government, which is the part of the government that makes laws. A **senator's** job is to represent the people living in his or her state in the United States Senate. Part of this job is to write and vote on new laws called “bills.”

<http://www.corker.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/kidspage>

**Ratification Facts**

**Proposed:**

Submitted by Congress to the states on May 13, 1912.

**Ratification:**

Ratified by the required three-fourths of states (thirty-six of forty-eight) by April 8, 1913, and by nine more states by March 9, 1922. Declared to be part of the Constitution on May 31, 1913.

**Ratifying States:**

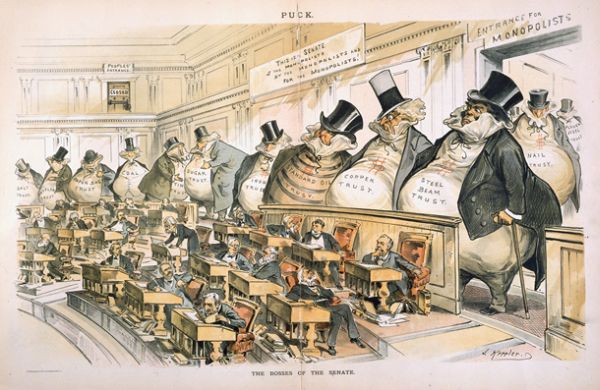
Massachusetts, May 22, 1912; Arizona, June 3, 1912; Minnesota, June 10, 1912; New York, January 15, 1913; Kansas, January 17, 1913; Oregon, January 23, 1913; North Carolina, January 25, 1913; California, January 28, 1913; Michigan, January 28, 1913; Iowa, January 30, 1913; Montana, January 30, 1913; Idaho, January 31, 1913; West Virginia, February 4, 1913; Colorado, February 5, 1913; Nevada, February 6, 1913; Texas, February 7, 1913; Washington, February 7, 1913; Wyoming, February 8, 1913; Arkansas, February 11, 1913; Maine, February 11, 1913; Illinois, February 13, 1913; North Dakota, February 14, 1913; Wisconsin, February 18, 1913; Indiana, February 19, 1913; New Hampshire, February 19, 1913; Vermont, February 19, 1913; South Dakota, February 19, 1913; Oklahoma, February 24, 1913; Ohio, February 25, 1913; Missouri, March 7, 1913; New Mexico, March 13, 1913; Nebraska, March 14, 1913; New Jersey, March 17, 1913; Tennessee, April 1, 1913; Pennsylvania, April 2, 1913; Connecticut, April 8, 1913. <http://ic.galegroup.com/ic/suic/ReferenceDetailsPage/ReferenceDetailsWindow?failOverType=&query=&prodId=SUIC&windowstate=normal&contentModules=&display-query=&mode=view&displayGroupName=Reference&limiter=&u=nysl_me_eastches&currPage=&disableHighlighting=false&displayGroups=&sortBy=&source=&search_within_results=&p=SUIC&action=e&catId=&activityType=&scanId=&documentId=GALE%7CCX2639900025>

Parliament voted for the 17th amendment by 276 to 25 (in a parliament of 400 members), significantly more than the required two-thirds majority (69%) required by law.

<http://ic.galegroup.com/ic/suic/NewsDetailsPage/NewsDetailsWindow?failOverType=&query=&prodId=SUIC&windowstate=normal&contentModules=&display-query=&mode=view&displayGroupName=News&limiter=&u=nysl_me_eastches&currPage=&disableHighlighting=false&displayGroups=&sortBy=&source=&search_within_results=&p=SUIC&action=e&catId=&activityType=&scanId=&documentId=GALE%7CA309528585>

But prior to the 17th Amendment, the Senate was infamously known as 'the millionaires' club.' This was because the path to get into the Senate was through the state legislatures. And since state legislatures, like other political institutions, were notoriously corrupt at the time, the path to the Senate quickly became who could buy their way in.

<http://education-portal.com/academy/lesson/what-is-the-17th-amendment-definition-summary-history.html#lesson>

This political cartoon criticizes the Senate as a millionaire club full of corruption.