

Sample Bequest Language

For supporters of the USS Constitution Museum

Most people who make bequests do so through their wills. If you already have a will, you can add a bequest to the USS Constitution Museum by means of a simple document called a codicil.

FORMS OF BEQUESTS

Specific sum of money:

“I give to the USS Constitution Museum, a Massachusetts nonprofit corporation, or its successor organization, Federal Tax Identification Number 04-2505888 the sum of [insert the exact dollar amount].”

Rest and residue of your estate after paying debts, taxes, expenses and other bequests:

“I give to the USS Constitution Museum, a Massachusetts nonprofit corporation, or its successor organization, Federal Tax Identification Number 04-2502888 all [or a stated percentage] of the rest, residue and remainder of my estate.”

Specific property such as real estate, stocks, bonds, works of art or other items:

“I give to the USS Constitution Museum, a Massachusetts nonprofit corporation, or its successor organization, Federal Tax Identification Number 04-2505888 [insert a description of the particular property].”

Contingent bequest, e.g., if you are not survived by certain individuals:

“If [name/s of primary beneficiary/ies] do/es not survive me, or shall die within ninety (90) days from the date of my death, or as a result of a common disaster, then I give to the USS Constitution Museum, a Massachusetts nonprofit corporation, or its successor organization, Federal Tax Identification Number 04-2505888 [insert the exact dollar amount, description of property or percentage of residual estate].”

BEQUESTS FOR RESTRICTED PURPOSES

You can add “for its general purposes” to the language above to allow the USS Constitution Museum to apply your gift to the greatest need at that time. (If you do not specify a particular purpose, such as endowment, the default assumption is that it is unrestricted.) If the bequest is for a restricted purpose, use the relevant language above and designate the particular program or area of activity to be supported.

Example: “I give to the USS Constitution Museum, a Massachusetts nonprofit corporation, or its successor organization, Federal Tax Identification Number 04-2505888 [insert the exact dollar amount, description of property or percentage of residual estate], to be used for [insert desired purpose, fund or department here] programs and activities.”

Before including such a provision in your will, please contact the USS Constitution Museum (see below) to ensure that the stated purpose is consistent with the Museum's mission and that the amount of the bequest is sufficient to fulfill your intentions.

Power to Vary Provision: It is recommended that the following paragraph be added when the bequest is for a restricted purpose.

“If, in the opinion of the Board of Trustees of the USS Constitution Museum, it should become impossible, inadvisable or impractical to use this gift for the specified purpose(s), then the Board may in its discretion use the gift for other purposes, keeping in mind the original wishes of the donor. In any such alternative application, the support provided by this bequest shall be clearly identified with the name of [donor's name].”

Please let us know if you have made an estate gift in support of the USS Constitution Museum. We would appreciate the chance to thank you personally and welcome you as a new member of the 1812 Society.

To notify us of a gift arrangement or for further information, please contact:

Melinda K. Cheston
USS Constitution Museum
PO Box 291812
Boston, MA 02129-0215
617-426-1812 x105 or mcheston@ussconstitutionmuseum.org

Regardless of the instrument you use, be sure to seek the assistance of your attorney. The information here does not constitute legal advice and should not be relied upon as a substitute for professional advice. It is meant as a helpful aide to be used in consultation with your attorney.