

Bill Summary

The Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-Fourth Amendment) Bill, 2019

- The Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-Fourth Amendment) Bill, 2019 was introduced in Lok Sabha by the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Mr. Thaawar Chand Gehlot on January 8, 2019. The Bill seeks to provide for the advancement of “economically weaker sections” of citizens.
- Article 15 of the Constitution prohibits discrimination against any citizen on the grounds of race, religion, caste, sex, or place of birth. However, the government may make special provisions for the advancement of socially and educationally backward classes, or for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The Bill seeks to amend Article 15 to additionally permit the government to provide for the advancement of “economically weaker sections”. Further, up to 10% of seats may be reserved for such sections for admission in educational institutions. Such reservation will not apply to minority educational institutions.
- Article 16 of the Constitution prohibits discrimination in employment in any government office. However, the government can allow reservation for any “backward class of citizens”, if they are not adequately represented in the services under the state. The Bill seeks to amend Article 16 to permit the government to reserve up to 10% of all posts for the “economically weaker sections” of citizens.
- The reservation of up to 10% for “economically weaker sections” in educational institutions and public employment will be in addition to the existing reservation.
- The central government will notify the “economically weaker sections” of citizens on the basis of family income and other indicators of economic disadvantage.

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