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U.S. Constitution becomes popular to read

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WASHINGTON May 21 (UPI) -- The U.S.

Constitution has become a popular document to read in Washington and beyond, thanks in part to the rise of the Tea Party movement, The Hill reports.

The pocket edition, which also includes the Declaration of Independence, shot up to 10th in March among top sellers at the Government Printing Office, the Washington-based publication said.

Gary Somerset, a GPO spokesman, said public sales of the pocket edition have climbed to 8,700, higher than normal, since September 2009.

But the public sales numbers are dwarfed by the distribution of some 441,000 copies printed for House members and 100,000 for senators. Constituents can ask for free copies from their members of Congress or buy copies at \$2.75 apiece.

"Many members have lately experienced a large increase in constituent requests for the Pocket Constitution," House Administration Committee Chairman Robert Brady, D-Pa., wrote in a recent letter to his colleagues. He urged them to buy copies through their office accounts at a discount rate of \$390 per 1,000.

"It was hard to get a lot of discussion going in (the House GOP) conference on the topic, but in the last year or so, the Constitution has become a much more favorite article of discussion," said Rep. Scott Garrett, R-N.J., who founded the Congressional Constitution Caucus in 2005.

David Lampo, publications director at the Cato Institute, credited the Tea Party with sparking the Constitution's rise in popularity.

Ed Meese, the former attorney general who now heads the Heritage Foundation's Constitution Center, said there's more interest in the Constitution now than in many years.

"I think it's because people are really worried about whether the federal government is getting

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so large, so expansive, so intrusive and so powerful that the Constitution is in jeopardy," Meese said.

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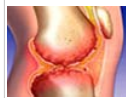
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Dear BP: Thanks so much for bumbling and fumbling around for the last month. Please step aside