The Articles of Confederation to the United States Constitution

By 1776, Americans’ desire for independence from England was growing rapidly, and on July 4th, 1776, the Second Continental Congress approved the Declaration of Independence. Although true freedom would not come until the end of the Revolutionary War, American colonies were now free states in theory.

Soon after, the individual states began drafting their own constitutions; eventually, each state realized there were some things it would not be able to do on its own. In 1777, the Second Continental Congress made plans to unite the states and laid out these plans in a document titled the “Articles of Confederation,” America’s first constitution. Within three years, all states had ratified the Articles of Confederation; however, the states acknowledged that many weaknesses existed.

The Facts:

- Congress could not pass a law unless nine of the thirteen colonies ratified it.
- Any effort to change or amend the Articles of Confederation required all thirteen states to agree upon the change.
- Even when Congress managed to get the necessary votes and pass laws, it did not have the power to enforce those laws.
- The Articles of Confederation did not provide for a governor or for courts.
- If a state decided to ignore a law, there was not a thing Congress could do.

Assignment:
Use the information provided in addition to your knowledge to write a letter to William Blount, a North Carolinian who signed the United States Constitution. The purpose of your letter is to convince William Blount that the Articles of Confederation is far too weak to govern a nation and that a new constitution addressing the problems will positively impact America and its people.

Sources:

As you write, consider the following:
- Positive effects
- Audience
- Organization
- Supporting details
- Clarity
- Grammar and Style