

**DECLARATION  
OF  
INDEPENDENCE**

**In Congress, July 4, 1776.  
THE UNANIMOUS DECLARATION  
OF THE THIRTEEN UNITED STATES  
OF AMERICA.**

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: - that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world:

He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation, till his assent should be

obtained; and when so suspended he has utterly neglected to attend to them. He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature - a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into a compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused, for a long time after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise, the state remaining, in the meantime, exposed to all the dangers of invasions from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of land.

He has obstructed the administration of justice by refusing his assent to laws establishing judiciary powers.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers, to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation.

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us;

For protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states;

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world;

For imposing taxes on us without our consent;

For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury;

For transporting us beyond the seas to be tried for pretended offenses;

For abolishing the free system of English laws, in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its

boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies;

For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering, fundamentally, the forms of our government;

For suspending our own legislature, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever;

He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection, and waging war against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow-citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and bretheren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has excited domestic insurrection amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms; our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them, from time to time, of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind - enemies in war; in peace, friends.

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in general congress assembled, appealing to the supreme judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that they are

absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that, as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

**CONSTITUTION OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA OF 1787**

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**Editor's note:** (1) This version of the Constitution of the United States of America is a continuation of a format for printing the Constitution that was initiated in 1908 by a commissioner appointed by the supreme court of the state of Colorado. This version contains a table of contents, changes in spelling and capitalization, caption headings, editor's notes, and an index. Additionally, the brackets in article I, section 2, clause (3) on page 11 indicate that the language contained therein was superseded or modified by amendments (see section 2 of the fourteenth amendment on page 21 and the sixteenth amendment on page 21); the brackets in article I, section 3, clauses (1) and (2) on page 11 indicate that the language contained therein is superseded or modified by the seventeenth amendment on page 22; and the brackets in article II, section 1, clause (3) on page 14 indicate that the language contained therein is superseded by the twelfth amendment on page 20. The reader should also note that provisions in article I, section 4, clause (2) on page 12 are superseded or modified by the twentieth amendment on page 22.

(2) The twenty-seven articles of amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America, including the Bill of Rights, are numbered and titled in this publication as "articles", rather than individual "amendments" to the Constitution. This practice is based on the language used in the original

proposals to amend the Constitution by the addition of articles of amendment, as well as on the official revised version of the Constitution of the United States which the 108th Congress of the United States ordered printed in 2003. That version of the Constitution provides that the "articles [are] in addition to, and amendment of, the constitution of the United States of America, proposed by Congress, and ratified by the legislatures of the several states, pursuant to the fifth article of the original Constitution." [See United States House of Representatives Document 108-95.] The practice of calling the articles of amendment "articles" is also consistent with, and even predates, the version of the Constitution commissioned by the Colorado Supreme Court in 1908, and dates as far back as the 1861 publication of the state's laws. However, recent trends in the publication of the articles of amendment to the Constitution may use the common term "amendments" rather than "articles".

**Cross references:** For the literal print of the Constitution of the United States of America, as contained in Senate Document No. 92-82 printed by the United States Government Printing Office, 1973, see pages x to xxxiii of the bound 1980 Replacement Volume 1A to the 1973 Colorado Revised Statutes.



## PREAMBLE

We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States of America.

## ARTICLE I

### The Legislative Department

**§ 1. Vestment of legislative power.** All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a congress of the United States, which shall consist of a senate and house of representatives.

**§ 2. House of representatives - qualifications of electors.** (1) The house of representatives shall be composed of members chosen every second year, by the people of the several states; and the electors in each state shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the state legislature.

(2) **Qualifications of representative.** No person shall be a representative who shall not have attained to the age of twenty-five years, and been seven years a citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an inhabitant of that state in which he shall be chosen.

(3) **Apportionment of representatives and taxes.** [Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several states which may be included within this union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons.] The actual enumeration shall be made within three years after the first meeting of the congress of the United States, and within every subsequent term of ten years, in such manner as they shall by law direct. The number of representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty thousand, but each state shall have at least one representative; and until such enumeration shall be made, the state of New Hampshire shall be entitled to choose three; Massachusetts, eight; Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, one; Connecticut, five; New York, six; New Jersey, four; Pennsylvania, eight; Delaware, one; Maryland, six; Virginia, ten; North Carolina, five; South Carolina, five; and Georgia, three.

(4) **Vacancies in representation - how filled.** When vacancies happen in the representation from any state, the executive authority thereof shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies.

(5) **Speaker - officers - impeachment.** The house of representatives shall choose their speaker and other officers; and shall have the sole power of impeachment.

§ 3. **Two senators from each state - how chosen.** (1) [The senate of the United States shall be composed of two senators from each state, chosen by the legislature thereof, for six years, and each senator shall have one vote.]

(2) **Classification of senators - vacancies.** Immediately after they shall be assembled, in consequence of the first election, they shall be divided, as equally as may be, into three classes. The seats of the senators of the first class shall be vacated at the expiration of the second year; of the second class, at the expiration of the fourth year; and of the third class, at the expiration of the sixth year; so that one-third may be chosen every second year; [and if vacancies happen by resignation or otherwise during the recess of the legislature of any state, the executive thereof may make temporary appointments until the next meeting of the legislature, which shall then fill such vacancies.]

(3) **Qualification of senators.** No person shall be a senator who shall not have attained the age of thirty years, and been nine years a citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an inhabitant of that state for which he shall be chosen.

(4) **President of senate.** The vice-president of the United States shall be president of the senate; but shall have no vote unless they be equally divided.

(5) **Officers of senate, how chosen.** The senate shall choose their other officers, and also a president pro tempore, in the absence of the vice-president, or when he shall exercise the office of president of the United States.

(6) **Senate to try impeachments.** The senate shall have the sole power to try all impeachments. When sitting for that purpose they shall be on oath or affirmation. When the president of the United States is tried, the chief justice shall preside; and no person shall be convicted without the concurrence of two-thirds of the members present.

(7) **Extent of judgment in impeachment.** Judgment, in cases of impeachment, shall not extend further than to removal from office and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust or profit under the United States; but the party convicted shall, nevertheless, be liable and subject to indictment, trial, judgment, and punishment, according to law.

**§ 4. Election of senators and representatives.** (1) The times, places and manner of holding elections for senators and representatives shall be prescribed in each state, by the legislature thereof, but the congress may at any time, by law, make or alter such regulations, except as to the places of choosing senators.

(2) **Congress shall assemble annually.** The congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.

**§ 5. Membership - quorum.** (1) Each house shall be the judge of the elections, returns, and qualifications of its own members, and a majority of each shall constitute a quorum to do business; but a smaller number may adjourn from day to day, and may be authorized to compel the attendance of absent members, in such manner and under such penalties as each house may provide.

(2) **Rules - punishment - expulsion.** Each house may determine the rules of its proceedings, punish its members for disorderly behavior, and, with a concurrence of two-thirds, expel a member.

(3) **Keep journal - yeas and nays.** Each house shall keep a journal of its proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such parts as may, in their judgment, require secrecy; and the yeas and nays of the members of either house, on any question, shall, at the desire of one-fifth of those present, be entered on the journal.

(4) **Adjournment.** Neither house, during the session of congress, shall, without the consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other place than that in which the two houses shall be sitting.

**§ 6. Compensation - privileges.** (1) The senators and representatives shall receive a compensation for their services, to be ascertained by law, and paid out of the treasury of the United States. They shall, in all cases, except treason, felony, and breach of the peace, be privileged from arrest during their attendance at the session of their respective houses, and in going to and returning from the same, and for any speech or debate in either house they shall not be questioned in any other place.

(2) **Members precluded from holding office.** No senator or representative shall, during the time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil office under the authority of the United States, which shall have been created, or the emoluments whereof shall have been increased, during such time;

and no person holding any office under the United States shall be a member of either house during his continuance in office.

**§ 7. Revenue bills.** (1) All bills for raising revenue shall originate in the house of representatives; but the senate may propose or concur with amendments, as on other bills.

(2) **Bills presented to president - veto - return.** Every bill which shall have passed the house of representatives and the senate, shall, before it become a law, be presented to the president of the United States; if he approve, he shall sign it; but if not, he shall return it, with his objections, to that house in which it shall have originated, who shall enter the objections, at large, on their journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If, after such reconsideration, two-thirds of that house shall agree to pass the bill, it shall be sent, together with the objections, to the other house, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and, if approved by two-thirds of that house, it shall become a law. But in all such cases the votes of both houses shall be determined by yeas and nays; and the names of persons voting for and against the bill shall be entered on the journal of each house respectively. If any bill shall not be returned by the president within ten days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the same shall be a law, in like manner as if he had signed it, unless the congress, by their adjournment, prevent its return; in which case it shall not be a law.

(3) **Orders - resolutions - presented to president.** Every order, resolution or vote, to which the concurrence of the senate and house of representatives may be necessary (except on a question of adjournment) shall be presented to the president of the United States; and, before the same shall take effect, shall be approved by him, or being disapproved by him shall be repassed by two-thirds of the senate and house of representatives, according to the rules and limitations prescribed in the case of a bill.

**§ 8. Powers of congress.** The congress shall have power:

(1) To lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises; to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

(2) To borrow money on the credit of the United States.

(3) To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.

(4) To establish an uniform rule of naturalization, and uniform laws on



the subject of bankruptcies throughout the United States.

(5) To coin money, regulate the value thereof, and of foreign coin, and fix the standard of weights and measures.

(6) To provide for the punishment of counterfeiting the securities and current coin of the United States.

(7) To establish post offices and post roads.

(8) To promote the progress of science and useful arts, by securing, for limited times, to authors and inventors, the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries.

(9) To constitute tribunals, inferior to the supreme court.

(10) To define and punish piracies and felonies committed on the high seas and offenses against the law of nations.

(11) To declare war, grant letters of marque and reprisal, and make rules concerning captures on land and water.

(12) To raise and support armies; but no appropriation of money to that use shall be for a longer term than two years.

(13) To provide and maintain a navy.

(14) To make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces.

(15) To provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions.

(16) To provide for organizing, arming and disciplining the militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States, reserving to the states respectively the appointment of the officers, and the authority of training the militia according to the discipline prescribed by congress.

(17) To exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever over such district (not exceeding ten miles square) as may by cession of particular states, and the acceptance of congress, become the seat of the government of the United States, and to exercise like authority over all places purchased, by the consent of the legislature of the state in which the same shall be, for the erection of forts, magazines, arsenals, dockyards and other needful buildings; and:

(18) To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

**§ 9. Slave trade.** (1) The migration or importation of such persons as any of the states now existing shall think proper to admit shall not be prohibited

by the congress prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a tax or duty may be imposed on such importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each person.

(2) **Habeas corpus.** The privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended, unless when, in cases of rebellion or invasion, the public safety may require it.

(3) **Attainder - ex post facto laws.** No bill of attainder or ex post facto law shall be passed.

(4) **Capitation tax.** No capitation or other direct tax shall be laid, unless in proportion to the census or enumeration hereinbefore directed to be taken.

(5) **Export duties - preference to ports.** No tax or duty shall be laid on articles exported from any state. No preference shall be given by any regulation of commerce or revenue to the ports of one state over those of another; nor shall vessels bound to or from one state be obliged to enter, clear, or pay duties in another.

(6) **Appropriations - statement and account.** No money shall be drawn from the treasury but in consequence of appropriations made by law; and a regular statement and account of the receipts and expenditures of all public money shall be published from time to time.

(7) **Nobility - presents from foreign powers.** No title of nobility shall be granted by the United States, and no person holding any office of profit or trust under them shall, without the consent of congress, accept any present, emolument, office, or title, of any kind whatever, from any king, prince, or foreign state.

§ 10. **Powers denied individual states.** (1) No state shall enter into any treaty, alliance or confederation; grant letters of marque or reprisal; coin money; emit bills of credit; make anything but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts; pass any bill of attainder, ex post facto law, or law impairing the obligation of contracts, or grant any title of nobility.

(2) **Powers denied individual states except by consent of congress.** No state shall, without the consent of congress, lay any imposts or duties on imports or exports, except what may be absolutely necessary for executing its inspection laws; and the net produce of all duties and imposts, laid by any state on imports or exports, shall be for the use of the treasury of the United States; and all such laws shall be subject to the revision and control of the congress. No state shall, without the consent of congress, lay any duty of tonnage, keep troops or ships of war in time of peace, enter into any agreement or compact with

another state, or with a foreign power, or engage in war, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent danger as will not admit of delay.

## ARTICLE II

### The Executive Department

§ 1. **President and vice-president.** (1) The executive power shall be vested in a president of the United States of America. He shall hold his office during the term of four years, and, together with the vice-president, chosen for the same term, be elected as follows:

(2) **Electors.** Each state shall appoint, in such manner as the legislature thereof may direct, a number of electors equal to the whole number of senators and representatives to which the state may be entitled in the congress; but no senator or representative, or person holding an office of trust or profit under the United States, shall be appointed an elector.

(3) **Vote of electors.** [The electors shall meet in their respective states, and vote by ballot for two persons, of whom one at least shall not be an inhabitant of the same state with themselves. And they shall make a list of all the persons voted for, and of the number of votes for each; which list they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of the government of the United States, directed to the president of the senate. The president of the senate shall, in the presence of the senate and house of representatives, open all the certificates, and the votes shall then be counted. The person having the greatest number of votes shall be the president, if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such majority, and have an equal number of votes, then the house of representatives shall immediately choose, by ballot, one of them for president, and if no person have a majority, then from the five highest on the list the said house shall, in like manner, choose the president. But in choosing the president, the votes shall be taken by states, the representation from each state having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the states, and a majority of all the states shall be necessary to a choice. In every case after the choice of the president the person having the greatest number of votes of the electors shall be the vice-president. But if there should remain two or more who have equal votes, the senate shall choose from them, by ballot, the vice-president.]

(4) **Election day.** The congress may determine the time of choosing the electors, and the day on which they shall give their votes, which day shall be the same throughout the United States.

(5) **Qualification of president.** No person except a natural-born

citizen, or a citizen of the United States at the time of the adoption of this constitution, shall be eligible to the office of president; neither shall any person be eligible to that office who shall not have attained to the age of thirty-five years, and been fourteen years a resident within the United States.

(6) **Vacancy in office of president - succession.** In case of the removal of the president from office, or of his death, resignation, or inability to discharge the powers and duties of the said office, the same shall devolve on the vice-president, and the congress may by law provide for the case of removal, death, resignation, or inability, both of the president and vice-president, declaring what officer shall then act as president, and such officer shall act accordingly, until the disability be removed, or a president shall be elected.

(7) **Compensation of president.** The president shall, at stated times, receive for his services a compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not receive, within that period, any other emolument from the United States, or any of them.

(8) **Oath of president.** Before he enter on the execution of his office, he shall take the following oath or affirmation:

(9) **Form of oath.** "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of president of the United States, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the constitution of the United States."

**§ 2. Powers of president.** (1) The president shall be commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States, and of the militia of the several states, when called into the actual service of the United States. He may require the opinion in writing of the principal officer in each of the executive departments, upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective offices; and he shall have power to grant reprieves and pardons for offenses against the United States, except in cases of impeachment.

(2) **Treaties - appointments.** He shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, to make treaties, provided two-thirds of the senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, shall appoint ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the supreme court, and all other officers of the United States, whose appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by law: But the congress may, by law, vest the appointment of such inferior officers as they may think proper, in the president alone, in the courts of law, or in the heads of departments.

(3) **President to fill vacancies.** The president shall have power to fill up all vacancies that may happen during the recess of the senate, by granting commissions, which shall expire at the end of their next session.

§ 3. **Duties of president.** He shall, from time to time, give to the congress information of the state of the Union, and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient. He may, on extraordinary occasions, convene both houses, or either of them, and in case of disagreement between them, with respect to the time of adjournment, he may adjourn them to such time as he shall think proper. He shall receive ambassadors and other public ministers. He shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed; and shall commission all the officers of the United States.

§ 4. **Impeachment.** The president and vice-president, and all civil officers of the United States, shall be removed from office on impeachment for, and conviction of, treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors.

### ARTICLE III

#### The Judicial Department

§ 1. **Judiciary - tenure - compensation.** The judicial power of the United States shall be vested in one supreme court, and in such inferior courts as the congress may, from time to time, ordain and establish.

The judges, both of the supreme court and inferior courts, shall hold their offices during good behavior, and shall, at stated times, receive for their services a compensation, which shall not be diminished during their continuance in office.

§ 2. **Jurisdiction.** (1) The judicial power shall extend to all cases in law and equity arising under this constitution, the laws of the United States, and treaties made, or which shall be made, under their authority; to all cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls; to all cases of admiralty and maritime jurisdiction; to controversies to which the United States shall be a party; to controversies between two or more states; between a state and citizens of another state; between citizens of different states; between citizens of the same state, claiming lands under grants of different states; and between a state or the citizens thereof and foreign states, citizens, or subjects.

(2) **Jurisdiction of supreme court.** In all cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, and those in which a state shall be party, the supreme court shall have original jurisdiction. In all other cases before mentioned the supreme court shall have appellate jurisdiction, both as to law and fact, with such exceptions, and under such regulations, as the congress shall make.

(3) **Trial by jury - venue.** The trial of all crimes, except in cases of impeachment, shall be by a jury; and such trial shall be held in the state where the said crime shall have been committed; but when not committed within any state, the trial shall be at such place or places as the congress may by law have directed.

§ 3. **Treason.** (1) Treason against the United States shall consist only in levying war against them, or in adhering to their enemies; giving them aid and comfort. No person shall be convicted of treason, unless on the testimony of two witnesses to the same overt act, or on confession in open court.

(2) **Punishment for treason.** The congress shall have power to declare the punishment of treason; but no attainder of treason shall work corruption of blood or forfeiture, except during the life of the person attainted.

## ARTICLE IV States and Territories

§ 1. **Public acts, records and proceedings of states.** Full faith and credit shall be given in each state to the public acts, records, and judicial proceedings of every other state. And the congress may, by general laws, prescribe the manner in which such acts, records and proceedings shall be proved, and the effect thereof.

§ 2. **Equality of privileges.** (1) The citizens of each state shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several states.

(2) **Fugitives from justice.** A person charged in any state with treason, felony or other crime, who shall flee from justice, and be found in another state, shall, on demand of the executive authority of the state from which he fled, be delivered up, to be removed to the state having jurisdiction of the crime.

(3) **Fugitives from service.** No person held to service or labor in one state, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be

delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.

**§ 3. Admission of new states.** (1) New states may be admitted by the congress into this Union; but no new state shall be formed or erected within the jurisdiction of any other state, nor any state be formed by the junction of two or more states, or parts of states, without the consent of the legislatures of the states concerned, as well as of the congress.

(2) **Power of congress over territories.** The congress shall have power to dispose of, and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this constitution shall be so construed as to prejudice any claims of the United States, or of any particular state.

**§ 4. Republican form of government - protection of states.** The United States shall guarantee to every state in this Union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion; and on application of the legislature or of the executive (when the legislature cannot be convened) against domestic violence.

## ARTICLE V

### Amendments to Constitution

**Amendments to constitution.** The congress, whenever two-thirds of both houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this constitution, or, on the application of the legislatures of two-thirds of the several states, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which, in either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several states, or by conventions in three-fourths thereof, as the one or the other mode of ratification may be proposed by the congress: Provided, That no amendment, which may be made prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight, shall in any manner affect the first and fourth clauses of the ninth section of the first article; and that no state, without its consent, shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the senate.

**ARTICLE VI**  
Miscellaneous Provisions

(1) **Debts prior to constitution.** All debts contracted, and engagements entered into, before the adoption of this constitution, shall be as valid against the United States, under this constitution, as under the confederation.

(2) **Supremacy of constitution, treaties and laws.** This constitution, and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof, and all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land; and the judges in every state shall be bound thereby; anything in the constitution or laws of any state to the contrary notwithstanding.

(3) **Oath to support constitution.** The senators and representatives beforementioned, and the members of the several legislatures, and all executive and judicial officers, both of the United States and of the several states, shall be bound, by oath or affirmation, to support this constitution; but no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States.

**ARTICLE VII**  
Ratification

**Ratification.** The ratification of the conventions of nine states shall be sufficient for the establishment of this constitution between states so ratifying the same.

*Done in Convention,* By the unanimous consent of the states present, the seventeenth day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven, and of the independence of the United States of America the twelfth.

*In Witness Whereof,* We have hereunto subscribed our names:

GEO. WASHINGTON, *President, and Deputy from Virginia*

New Hampshire:

John Langdon,  
Nicholas Gilman.

Connecticut:

Wm. Samuel Johnson,  
Roger Sherman.

New York:

Alexander Hamilton.



New Jersey:

William Livingston,  
David Brearley,  
William Paterson,  
Jonathan Dayton.

Pennsylvania:

Benjamin Franklin,  
Thomas Mifflin,  
Robert Morris,  
George Clymer,  
Thomas Fitzsimons,  
Jared Ingersoll,  
James Wilson,  
Gouverneur Morris.

Massachusetts:

Nathaniel Gorham,  
Rufus King. Delaware:  
Geo. Read,  
Gunning Bedford, Jr.  
John Dickinson,  
Richard Bassett,  
Jacob Broom.

Maryland:

James McHenry  
Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer,  
Daniel Carroll.

Virginia:

John Blair,  
James Madison, Jr.

North Carolina:

William Blount,  
Richard Dobbs Speight,  
Hugh Williamson.

South Carolina:

John Rutledge,  
C. Cotesworth Pinckney,  
Charles Pinckney,  
Pierce Butler.

Georgia:

William Few,  
Abraham Baldwin.

Attest WILLIAM JACKSON, *Secretary*.

# Amendments to the Constitution of the United States

## ARTICLE I

**Freedom of religion, speech and press - right of petition.** Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

## ARTICLE II

**Right of arms.** A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

## ARTICLE III

**Quartering of troops.** No soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house without the consent of the owner; nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

## ARTICLE IV

**Searches and seizures regulated.** The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures shall not be violated; and no warrant shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

## ARTICLE V

**Grand jury - indictment - jeopardy - process of law - taking property for public use.** No person shall be held to answer for a capital or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service, in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled, in any criminal case, to be a witness against himself; nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private

property be taken for public use without just compensation.

## ARTICLE VI

**Rights of accused.** In all criminal prosecutions the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury of the state and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor; and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

## ARTICLE VII

**Jury trial in civil actions.** In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved; and no fact tried by a jury shall be otherwise re-examined in any court of the United States than according to the rules of the common law.

## ARTICLE VIII

**Excessive bail, fines or punishments.** Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

## ARTICLE IX

**Reserved rights.** The enumeration in the constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

## ARTICLE X

**Reserved powers.** The powers not delegated to the United States by the constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.

## ARTICLE XI

**States may not be sued by individual.** The judicial power of the United States shall not be construed to extend to any suit in law or equity

commenced or prosecuted against one of the United States by citizens of another state, or by citizens or subjects of any foreign state.

## ARTICLE XII

**Mode of electing president and vice-president.** The electors shall meet in their respective states and vote by ballot for president and vice-president, one of whom at least shall not be an inhabitant of the same state as themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as president; and in distinct ballots the person voted for as vice-president; and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as president, and of all persons voted for as vice-president, and of the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of government of the United States, directed to the president of the senate; the president of the senate shall, in the presence of the senate and house of representatives, open all the certificates, and the votes shall then be counted. The person having the greatest number of votes for president shall be the president, if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers, not exceeding three, on the list of those voted for as president, the house of representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the president. But in choosing the president, the votes shall be taken by states, the representation from each state having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the states, and a majority of all the states shall be necessary to a choice. And if the house of representatives shall not choose a president whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them, before the fourth day of March next following, then the vice-president shall act as president, as in the case of death or other constitutional disability of the president. The person having the greatest number of votes as vice-president shall be vice-president, if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed; and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list the senate shall choose the vice-president; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of president, shall be eligible to that of vice-president of the United States.

## ARTICLE XIII

**§ 1. Slavery prohibited.** Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, whereof the party shall have been duly

convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

§ 2. **Enforcement of article.** Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

## ARTICLE XIV

§ 1. **Citizenship defined - privileges of citizens.** All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

§ 2. **Apportionment of representatives among states.** Representatives shall be apportioned among the several states according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each state, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for president and vice-president of the United States, representatives in congress, the executive and judicial officers of a state, or the members of the legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such state, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such state.

§ 3. **Disability to hold office in certain cases.** No person shall be a senator or representative in Congress, or elector of president or vice-president, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any state, who, having previously taken an oath as a member of congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any state legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any state, to support the constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But congress may, by a vote of two-thirds of

each house, remove such disability.

**§ 4. Validity of public debt.** The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any state shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave, but all such debts, obligations and claims shall be held illegal and void.

**§ 5. Enforcement of article.** The congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

## ARTICLE XV

**§ 1. Right of suffrage.** The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States, or by any state on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude.

**§ 2. Enforcement of article.** Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

## ARTICLE XVI

**Income tax.** The congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several states, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

## ARTICLE XVII

(1) **Election of senators by people.** The senate of the United States shall be composed of two senators from each state, elected by the people thereof, for six years; and each senator shall have one vote. The electors in each state shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the state legislatures.

(2) **Filling of vacancies.** When vacancies happen in the representation of any state in the senate, the executive authority of such state shall issue writs

of election to fill such vacancies: provided, that the legislature of any state may empower the executive thereof to make temporary appointments until the people fill the vacancies by election as the legislature may direct.

(3) **Existing terms not affected.** This amendment shall not be so construed as to affect the election or term of any senator chosen before it becomes valid as part of the constitution.

## ARTICLE XVIII

§ 1. **Prohibition of intoxicating liquors.** After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.

§ 2. **Enforcement of article.** The congress and the several states shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

§ 3. **Ratification.** This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the constitution by the legislatures of the several states, as provided in the constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the states by the congress. (Repealed: See Article XXI.)

## ARTICLE XIX

§ 1. **Extending right of suffrage to women.** The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

§ 2. **Enforcement of article.** Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

## ARTICLE XX

§ 1. **Beginning of terms of president, vice-president, senators and representatives.** The terms of the president and vice-president shall end at noon



on the 20th day of January, and the terms of senators and representatives at noon on the third day of January, of the years in which such terms would have ended if this article had not been ratified; and the terms of their successors shall then begin.

§ 2. **Assembly of congress.** The congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall begin at noon on the third day of January, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.

§ 3. **Death of president.** If, at the time fixed for the beginning of the term of the president, the president elect shall have died, the vice-president elect shall become president. If a president shall not have been chosen before the time fixed for the beginning of his term, or if the president elect shall have failed to qualify, then the vice-president elect shall act as president until a president shall have qualified; and the congress may by law provide for the case wherein neither a president elect nor a vice-president elect shall have qualified, declaring who shall then act as president, or the manner in which one who is to act shall be selected, and such person shall act accordingly until a president or vice-president shall have qualified.

§ 4. **Death of persons from whom successor chosen.** The congress may by law provide for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the house of representatives may choose a president whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them, and for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the senate may choose a vice-president whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them.

§ 5. **Effective date.** Sections 1 and 2 shall take effect on the fifteenth day of October following the ratification of this article.

§ 6. **Ratification.** This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several states within seven years from the date of its submission.

## ARTICLE XXI

§ 1. **Repeal of eighteenth amendment.** The eighteenth article of amendment to the constitution of the United States is hereby repealed.

§ 2. **Transportation in violation of state laws prohibited.** The transportation or importation into any state, territory, or possession of the United States for delivery or use therein of intoxicating liquors, in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby prohibited.

§ 3. **Ratification.** This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the constitution by conventions in the several states, as provided in the constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the states by the congress.

## ARTICLE XXII

§ 1. **Limitation upon terms of president.** No person shall be elected to the office of the president more than twice, and no person who has held the office of president, or acted as president, for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected shall be elected to the office of the president more than once. But this article shall not apply to any person holding the office of president when this article was proposed by the congress, and shall not prevent any person who may be holding the office of president, or acting as president, during the term within which this article becomes operative from holding the office of president or acting as president during the remainder of such term.

§ 2. **Ratification.** This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several states within seven years from the date of its submission to the states by the congress.

## ARTICLE XXIII

§ 1. The District constituting the seat of Government of the United States shall appoint in such manner as the Congress may direct:

A number of electors of president and vice-president equal to the whole

number of senators and representatives in Congress to which the District would be entitled if it were a State, but in no event more than the least populous State; they shall be in addition to those appointed by the States, but they shall be considered, for the purposes of the election of President and Vice-President, to be electors appointed by a State; and they shall meet in the District and perform such duties as provided by the twelfth article of amendment.

§ 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

**Editor's note:** Passed by Congress, June 16, 1960; certificate of validity filed April 3, 1961.

**ARTICLE XXIV**  
**Qualifications of Electors; Poll Tax**

§ 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.

§ 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

**Editor's note:** Passed by Congress, August 27, 1962; certificate of validity filed February 5, 1964.

**ARTICLE XXV**  
**Succession to Presidency and Vice Presidency; Disability of President**

§ 1. In case of the removal of the President from office or of his death or resignation, the Vice President shall become President.

§ 2. Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the Vice President, the President shall nominate a Vice President who shall take office upon

confirmation by a majority vote of both Houses of Congress.

§ 3. Whenever the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, and until he transmits to them a written declaration to the contrary, such powers and duties shall be discharged by the Vice President as Acting President.

§ 4. Whenever the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive departments or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall immediately assume the powers and duties of the office as Acting President.

Thereafter, when the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that no inability exists, he shall resume the powers and duties of his office unless the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive department or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit within four days to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office. Thereupon Congress shall decide the issue, assembling within forty-eight hours for that purpose if not in session. If the Congress, within twenty-one days after receipt of the latter written declaration, or, if Congress is not in session, within twenty-one days after Congress is required to assemble, determines by two-thirds vote of both Houses that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall continue to discharge the same as Acting President; otherwise, the President shall resume the powers and duties of his office.

**Editor's note:** This article was ratified by Colorado on February 3, 1966, and by three-fourths of the state on February 23, 1967.

## ARTICLE XXVI

### Right to Vote; Citizens Eighteen Years of Age or Older

§ 1. The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age.

§ 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

**Editor's note:** This article was ratified by the thirty-eighth state on June 30, 1971.

## ARTICLE XXVII

### **Effective Date for Variance in the Compensation of Senators and Representatives**

No law, varying the compensation for the services of the Senators and Representatives, shall take effect, until an election of Representatives shall have intervened.

**Editor's note:** This article was ratified by the Fifty-fourth General Assembly of the state of Colorado at its Second Regular Session in 1984 (see L. 84, pp. 1151-52) and by the thirty-eighth state, Michigan, on May 7, 1992.