

# The Constitution 

of the
United States of America

## PREAMBLE

We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, 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 for the United States of America.

## ARTICLE I

## Section 1.

Legislative powers; in whom vested
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.

## Section 2.

House of Representatives, how and by whom chosen
Qualifications of a Representative.
Representatives and direct taxes, how apportioned. Enumeration.
Vacancies to be filled.
Power of choosing officers, and of impeachment.

1. The House of Representatives shall be composed of members chosen every second year by the people of the several States, and the elector in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State Legislature.
2. No person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained 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. Representatives [and direct taxes] <<Altered by 16th Amendment>> 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 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.] <<Altered by 14th Amendment>> 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. When vacancies happen in the representation from any State, the Executive Authority thereof shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies.
5. The House of Representatives shall choose their Speaker and other officers; and shall have the sole power of impeachment.

## Section 3.

Senators, how and by whom chosen.
How classified.
State Executive, when to make temporary appointments, in case, etc.
Qualifications of a Senator.
President of the Senate, his right to vote.
President pro tem., and other officers of the Senate, how chosen.
Power to try impeachments.
When President is tried,
Chief Justice to preside. Sentence.

1. The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, [chosen by the Legislature thereof,] <<Altered by 17th Amendment>> for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote.
2. Immediately October 31, 1984 after
3. 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.] <<Altered by 17th Amendment>>
4. No person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to 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.
5. The Vice-President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no vote, unless they be equally divided.
6. 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 the President of the United States.
7. 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.
8. Judgement 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, judgement and punishment, according to law.

## Section 4.

Times, etc., of holding elections, how prescribed. One session in each year.

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. The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall be [on the first Monday in December,] <<Altered by 20th Amendment>> unless they by law appoint a different day.

## Section 5.

Membership, Quorum, Adjournments, Rules, Power to punish or expel.
Journal.
Time of adjournments, how limited, etc.

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. Each House may determine the rules of its proceedings, punish its members for disorderly behavior, and, with the concurrence of two-thirds, expel a member.
3. Each House shall keep a journal of its proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such parts as may in their judgement 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. 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.

## Section 6.

Compensation, Privileges, Disqualification in certain cases.

1. The Senators and Representatives shall receive a compensation for their October 31, 1984 services,
2. 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.
3. 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 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.

## Section 7.

House to originate all revenue bills.

## Veto.

Bill may be passed by two-thirds of each House, notwithstanding, etc.
Bill, not returned in ten days to become a law. Provisions as to orders, concurrent resolutions, etc.

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. 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 the 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. 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 re-passed by two-thirds of the Senate and House of Representatives, according to the rules and limitations prescribed in the case of a bill.

## Section 8. <br> Powers of Congress

The Congress shall have the power

1. to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defence 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:
6. To establish post-offices and post-roads:
7. 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:
8. To constitute tribunals inferior to the supreme court:
9. To define and punish piracies and felonies committed
on the high seas, and offences against the law of nations:
10. To declare war, grant letters of marque and reprisal, and make rules concerning October 31, 1984 captures
11. 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: 14 . To provide and maintain a navy:
13. To make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces:
14. To provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the union, suppress insurrections and repel invasions:
15. 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:
16. To exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoev-
er, 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 legistature of the state in which the same shall be, for the erection of forts, magazines, arsenals, dock-yards, and other needful buildings: And,
17. 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.

Provision as to migration or importation of certain persons. Habeas Corpus, Bills of attainder, etc. Taxes, how apportioned. No export duty. No commercial preference. Money, how drawn from Treasury, etc. No titular nobility. Officers not top receive presents, etc.

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 1808, but a tax or duty may be imposed on such importations, not exceeding 10 dollars for each person.
2. 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. No bill of attainder or ex post facto law shall be passed.
4. [No capitation, or other direct tax shall be laid unless in proportion to the census or enumeration herein before directed to be taken.] <<Altered by 16th Amendment>> 5. No tax or duty shall be laid on articles exported from any state.
5. 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. 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. 8. No title of nobility shall be granted by the United States: And no person holding any office or profit or trust under them, shall, without the consent of the Congress, accept of any present, emolument, office, or title, of any kind whatever, from any king, prince, or foreign state.

## Section 10.

States prohibited from the exercise of certain powers.

1. No state shall enter into any treaty, alliance, or confed-


## Section 1.

President: his term of office. Electors of President; number and how appointed.
Electors to vote on same day.
Qualification of President.
On whom his duties devolve in case of his removal, death, etc. President's compensation.
His oath of office.

1. The Executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold office during the term of four years, and together with the Vice President, chosen for the same term, be elected as follows 2. [Each State] <<Altered by 23rd Amendment>> shall appoint, in such manner as the Legislature 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 [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 each; which list 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 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.] <<Altered by 12 th Amendment>>
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. [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.] <<Altered by October 31, 1984 25th 6. Amendment>>
5. 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 . Before he enter on the execution of his office, he shall take the following oath or affirmation: "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of the President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.'

## Section 2.

President to be Commander-in-Chief. He may require opinions of cabinet officers, etc., may pardon. Treatymaking power. Nomination of certain officers. When President may fill vacancies.

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 against the United States, except in cases of impeachment.
2. 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 think proper, in the President alone, in the courts of law, or in the heads of departments.
3. The President shall have the power to fill up all vacancies that may may happen during the recess of the Senate, by granting commissions, which shall expire at the end of their next session.

## Section 3.

President shall communicate to Congress. He may convene and adjourn Congress, in case of disagreement, etc. Shall receive ambassadors, execute laws, and commission officers. 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 may 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.

## Section 4.

## All civil offices forfeited for certain crimes.

The President, 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

## Section 1.

Judicial powers. 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, October 31, 1984 ordain 1. and establish. The judges, both of the supreme and inferior courts, shall hold their offices during good behaviour, and shall, at stated times, receive for their services a compensation, which shall not be diminished during their continuance in office.

## Section 2.

## Judicial power; to what cases it extends.

Original jurisdiction of Supreme Court Appellate.
Trial by Jury, etc. Trial, where 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.] <<Altered by 11 th Amendment>> 2 . In all cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, and those in which a state shall be a party,
the supreme court shall have original jurisdiction. In all the 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. The trial of all crimes, except in cases of impeachment, shall be by jury; and such trial shall be held in the state where the said crimes shall have been committed; but
state, the trial shall be at such place or places as the Congress may by law have directed.

## Section 3.

## Treason defined.

## Proof of.

## Punishment

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. 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

## Section 1.

Each State to give credit to the public acts, etc. of every other State. 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.

## Section 2.

Privileges of citizens of each State.
Fugitives from Justice to be delivered up.
Persons held to service having escaped, to be delivered up.

1. The citizens of each state shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several states. <<See the 14th Amendment>>
2. A person charged in any state with treason, felony, or other crime, who shall flee 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. [No person held October 31, 1984 to 4 . service or labour 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 labour, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labour may be due.] <<Altered by 13th Amendment>>

Admission of new States
Power of Congress over territory and other property.

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, without the consent of the legislatures of the states concerned, as well as of the Congress.
2. 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.

## Section 4.

Republican form of government guaranteed.
Each State to be protected.
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 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 rat-- ification may be proposed by the Congress: Provided, " that no amendment which may be made prior to the year 1808, shall in any manner affect the first and fourth clauses in 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

1. 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. 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, any thing in the constitution or laws of any state to the contrary notwithstanding.
3. The senators and representatives before-mentioned, and the members of the several state 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. October 31, 19841.

## ARTICLE VII

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

# The United States Bill of Rights 

The Ten Original Amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

Passed by Congress September 25, 1789 Ratified December 15, 1791

I 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 grieva

II A well-regulated militia, being nece ty of a free State, the right of the peop arms, shall not be infringed.

III No soldier shall, in time of peace $b$ house, without the consent of the ow war, but in a manner to be prescribed

IV The right of the people to be secu houses, papers, and effects, against ur es and seizures, shall not be violated shall issue, but upon probable cause, or affirmation, and particularly describ searched, and the persons or things to

V No person shall be held to answer f erwise infamous crime, unless on indictment of a Grand Jury, except in land or naval forces, or in the Militia, vice in time of War or public danger; son be subject for the same offense jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be criminal case to be a witness again deprived of life, liberty, or property, w of law; nor shall private property be $t$ without just compensation.

VI In all criminal prosecutions, the a the right to a speedy and public trial, $b$ of the State and district wherein the been committed, which district shall $h$ ly ascertained by law, and to be info and cause of the accusation; to be confon witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

VII 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. VIII Excessive bail shall not be requir fines imposed, nor cruel and unus inflicted.
IX The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights,
shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.
X 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.


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