

**Office of the Vermont Secretary of State
Vermont State Archives**

NOTE: The Council of Censors proposals which were adopted by the 1793 Constitutional Convention are underlined. Portions of the 1786 Constitution which were deleted are set off in brackets [like this]. The Preamble was deleted by action of the Constitutional Convention of 1793.

THE CONSTITUTION OF 1793

**Chapter I
A Declaration of the Rights
of the Inhabitants of the State of Vermont.**

Article 1st.

That all men are born equally free and independent, and have certain natural, inherent, and unalienable rights, amongst which are the enjoying and defending life and liberty, acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety: therefore, no male person born in this country, or brought from over sea, ought to be holden by law, to serve any person as a servant, slave, or apprentice, after he arrives to the age of twenty one years, nor female in like manner, after she arrives to the age of eighteen years, unless they are bound by their own consent, after they arrive to such age, or bound by law for the payment of debts, damages, fines, costs, or the like.

Article 2nd.

That private property ought to be subservient to public uses when necessity requires it, nevertheless, whenever any [particular man's] person's property is taken for the use of the public, the owner ought to receive an equivalent in money.

Article 3rd.

That all men have a natural and unalienable right, to worship Almighty God, according to the dictates of their own consciences and understandings, as in their opinion shall be regulated by the word of God: and that no man ought to, or of right can be compelled to attend

any religious worship, or erect or support any place of worship, or maintain any minister, contrary to the dictates of his conscience, nor can any man be justly deprived or abridged of any civil right as a citizen, on account of his religious sentiments, or peculiar mode of religious worship; and that no authority can, or ought to be vested in, or assumed by, any power whatever, that shall in any case interfere with, or in any manner controul the rights of conscience, in the free exercise of religious worship. Nevertheless, every sect or denomination of christians ought to observe the Sabbath or Lord's day, and keep up some sort of religious worship, which to them shall seem most agreeable to the revealed will of God.

Article 4th.

Every person within this state ought to find a certain remedy, by having recourse to the laws, for all injuries or wrongs which he may receive in his person, property or character; he ought to obtain right and justice, freely, and without being obliged to purchase it; compleatly and without any denial; promptly and without delay; conformably to the laws.

Article 5th.

That the people of this State by their legal representatives, have the sole, [exclusive and inherent] inherent, and exclusive right of governing and regulating the internal police of the same.

Article 6th.

That all power being originally inherent in and consequently derived from the people, therefore, all officers of government, whether legislative or executive, are their trustees and servants; and at all times, in a legal way, accountable to them.

Article 7th.

That government is, or ought to be, instituted for the common benefit, protection, and security of the people, nation, or community, and not for the particular emolument or advantage of any single man, family, or set of men, who are a part only of that community; and that the community hath an indubitable, unalienable, and indefeasible right, to reform or alter government, in such manner as shall be, by that

community, judged most conducive to the public weal.

[Article 8th.

That those who are employed in the legislative and executive business of the State, may be restrained from oppression, the people have a right, by their legal Representatives, to enact laws for reducing their public officers to a private station, and for supplying the vacancies in a constitutional manner, by regular elections, at such periods as they may think proper.]

Article 8th.

That all elections ought to be free and without corruption, and that all freemen, having a sufficient, evident, common interest with, and attachment to the community, have a right to elect officers, and be elected into office, agreeably to the regulations made in this constitution.

Article 9th.

That every member of society hath a right to be protected in the enjoyment of life, liberty, and property, and therefore is bound to contribute his proportion towards the expense of that protection, and yield his personal service, when necessary, or an equivalent thereto, but no part of [a man's] any person's property can be justly taken from him or applied to public uses, without his own consent, or that of the Representative Body of the freemen, nor can any man who is conscientiously scrupulous of bearing arms, be justly compelled thereto, if he will pay such equivalent; nor are the people bound by any law but such as they have in like manner assented to, for their common good: and previous to any law being made to raise a tax, the purpose for which it is to be raised ought to appear evident to the Legislature to be of more service to community than the money would be if not collected.

Article 10th.

That in all prosecutions for criminal offences, [a man] a person hath a right to be heard by himself and his counsel; to demand the cause and nature of his accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses; to call for evidence in his favour, and a speedy public trial by an impartial jury

of the country; without the unanimous consent of which jury, he cannot be found guilty; nor can he be compelled to give evidence against himself; nor can [he] any person be justly deprived of his liberty, except by the laws of the land, or the judgment of his peers.

Article 11th.

That the people have a right to hold themselves, their houses, papers, and possessions, free from search or seizure; and therefore warrants, without oath[s] or affirmation[s] first made, affording sufficient foundation for them, and whereby any officer or messenger may be commanded or required to search suspected places, or to seize any person or persons, his, her or their property, not particularly described, are contrary to that right, and ought not to be granted.

Article 12th.

That when any issue in fact, proper for the cognizance of a jury is joined in a court of law, the parties have a right to trial by jury, which ought to be held sacred.

[Article 13th.

That no warrant or writ to attach the person or estate of any freeholder within this state, shall be issued in civil actions, without the person or persons who may request such warrant or attachment first make oath, or affirm before the authority who may be requested to issue the same, that he or they are in danger of losing his, her, or their debt.]

Article 13th.

That the people have a right to freedom of speech, and of writing and publishing their sentiments, concerning the transactions of government, and therefore the freedom of the press ought not to be restrained.

Article 14th.

The freedom of deliberation, speech and debate, in the Legislature, is so essential to the rights of the people, that it cannot be the foundation of any accusation or prosecution, action or complaint, in any other court or place whatsoever.

Article 15th.

The power of suspending laws, or the execution of laws, ought never to be exercised but by the Legislature, or by authority derived from it, to be exercised in such particular cases [only], as this constitution, or the Legislature shall [expressly] provide for.

Article 16th.

That the people have a right to bear arms for the defence of themselves and the State--and as standing armies in the time of peace are dangerous to liberty, they ought not to be kept up; and that the military should be kept under strict subordination to and governed by the civil power.

Article 17th.

That no person in this state can in any case be subjected to law martial, or to any penalties or pains by virtue of that law, except those employed in the army, and the militia in actual service.

Article 18th.

That frequent recurrence to fundamental principles, and a firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, industry, and frugality, are absolutely necessary to preserve the blessings of liberty, and keep government free; the people ought, therefore, to pay particular attention to these points, in the choice of officers and representatives, and have a right, in a legal way, to exact a due and constant regard to them, from their legislators and magistrates, in [the] making and executing such laws as are necessary for the good government of the State.

Article 19th.

That all people have a natural and inherent right to emigrate from one state to another that will receive them [; or to form a new State in vacant countries, or in such countries as they can purchase, whenever they think that thereby they can promote their own happiness].

Article 20th.

That the people have a right, to assemble together to consult for their common good--to instruct their Representatives--and to apply to the Legislature for redress of grievances, by address, petition or remonstrance.

Article 21st.

That no person shall be liable to be transported out of this state for trial for any offence committed within the same.

CHAPTER II PLAN OR FRAME OF GOVERNMENT

SECTION 1st.

The Commonwealth, or State of Vermont, shall be governed hereafter, by a Governor (or Lieutenant Governor) Council, and an Assembly of the Representatives of the freemen of the same, in manner and form following:

SECTION 2nd.

The Supreme Legislative power shall be vested in a House of Representatives of the freemen [or] of the Commonwealth or State of Vermont.

SECTION 3rd.

The Supreme Executive power shall be vested in a Governor, or, in his absence, a Lieutenant Governor, and Council.

SECTION 4th.

Courts of justice shall be maintained in every county in this State, and also in new counties, when formed; which courts shall be open for the trial of all causes proper for their cognizance; and justice shall be therein impartially administered, without corruption, or unnecessary delay. The Judges of the Supreme Court shall be Justices of the peace throughout the State; and the several Judges of the County Courts, in their respective counties, by virtue of their office, except in the trial of such causes as may be appealed to the County Court.

SECTION 5th.

A future Legislature may, when they shall conceive the same to be expedient and necessary, erect a Court of Chancery, with such powers as are usually exercised by that Court, or as shall appear for the interest of the Commonwealth.--Provided they do not constitute themselves the Judges of the said Court.

SECTION 6th.

The Legislative, Executive, and Judiciary departments, shall be separate and distinct, so that neither exercise the powers properly belonging to the other.

SECTION 7th.

In order that the freemen of this State might enjoy the benefit of election as equally as may be, each town within this State, that consists, or may consist of eighty taxable inhabitants, within one septenary or seven years next after the establishing this Constitution, may hold elections therein, and choose each two Representatives; and each other inhabited town in this State, may, in like manner, choose each one Representative, to represent them in the General Assembly, during the said septenary, or seven years, and after that, each inhabited town may, in like manner hold such election, and choose each one representative, forever thereafter.

SECTION 8th.

The House of Representatives of the freeman of this State, shall consist of persons most noted for wisdom and virtue, to be chosen by ballot, by the freemen of every town in this State, respectively, on the first Tuesday of September annually, forever.

SECTION 9th.

The Representatives so chosen (a majority of whom shall constitute a quorum for transacting any other business than raising a State tax, for which two thirds of the members elected shall be present) shall meet on the second Thursday of the succeeding October, and shall be stiled *The General Assembly of the State of Vermont*: they shall have power

to choose their Speaker, Secretary of the State, their Clerk, and other necessary officers of the House--sit on their own adjournments--prepare bills and enact them into laws--judge of the elections and qualifications of their own members: they may expel members but not for causes known to their constituents antecedent to their election: they may administer oaths or affirmations in matters depending before them--redress grievances--impeach state criminals--grant charters of incorporation--constitute towns, boroughs, cities and counties: they may annually, on their first session after their election, in conjunction with the Council (or oftener if need be) elect Judges of the Supreme and several County and Probate Courts, Sheriffs and Justices of the peace; and also, with the Council, may elect Major-Generals and Brigadier-Generals, from time to time, as often as there shall be occasion: and they shall have all other powers necessary for the Legislature of a free and sovereign State: but they shall have no power to add to, alter, abolish, or infringe any part of this Constitution.

SECTION 10th.

The Supreme Executive Council of this State, shall consist of a Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and twelve persons, chosen in the following manner, viz. The freemen of each town shall, on the day of election for choosing Representatives to attend the General Assembly, bring in their votes for Governor, with his name fairly written, to the Constable, who shall seal them up, and write on them, *Votes for the Governor*, and deliver them to the Representative chosen to attend the General Assembly; and at the opening of the General Assembly, there shall be a committee appointed out of the Council and Assembly, who, after being duly sworn to the faithful discharge of their trust, shall proceed to receive, sort, and count the votes for the Governor, and declare the person who has the major part of the votes, to be Governor for the year ensuing. And if there be no choice made, then the Council and General Assembly, by their joint ballot, shall make choice of a Governor. The Lieutenant Governor and Treasurer shall be chosen in the manner above directed. And each freeman shall give in twelve votes for twelve Councillors, in the same manner, and the twelve highest in nomination shall serve for the ensuing year as Councillors.

SECTION 11th.

The Governor, and in his absence the Lieutenant Governor, with the Council, (a major part of whom, including the Governor or Lieutenant Governor, shall be a quorum to transact business) shall have power to

commission[ate] all Officers--and also to appoint Officers, except where provision is, or shall be otherwise made, by law, or this Frame of Government--and shall supply every vacancy in any office, occasioned by death or otherwise, until the office can be filled in the manner directed by law or this Constitution. They are to correspond with other states--transact business with officers of government civil and military--and to prepare such business as may appear to them necessary, to lay before the General Assembly. They shall sit as Judges to hear and determine on impeachments, taking to their assistance, for advice only, the Judges of the Supreme Court. And shall have power to grant pardons and remit fines, in all cases whatsoever, except in treason and murder; in which they shall have power to grant reprieves, but not to pardon, until after the end of the next session of Assembly; and except in cases of impeachment, in which there shall be no remission, or mitigation of punishment, but by act of legislation. They are also to take care that the laws be faithfully executed. They are to expedite the execution of such measures as may be resolved upon by the General Assembly. And they may draw upon the [Treasurer] Treasury for such sums as may be appropriated by the House of Representatives. They may also lay embargoes, or prohibit the exportation of any commodity, for any time not exceeding thirty days, in the recess of the House only. They may grant such licenses as shall be directed by law; and shall have power to call together the General Assembly, when necessary, before the day to which they shall stand adjourned. The Governor shall be Captain-General and Commander in Chief of the forces of the State, but shall not command in person, except advised thereto by the Council, and then only so long as they shall approve thereof. And the Lieutenant Governor shall, by virtue of his office, be Lieutenant General of all the forces of the State. The Governor, or Lieutenant Governor, and the Council, shall meet at the time and place with the General Assembly: the Lieutenant Governor shall, during the presence of the Commander in Chief, vote and act as one of the Council: and the Governor, and in his absence the Lieutenant Governor, shall, by virtue of their offices, preside in Council, and have a casting but no other vote. Every Member of the Council shall be a Justice of the peace for the whole State, by virtue of his office. The Governor and Council shall have a Secretary, and keep fair books of their proceedings, wherein any councillor may enter his dissent, with his reasons to support it; and the Governor may appoint a Secretary for himself and his Council.

SECTION 12th.

The Representatives having met, and chosen their Speaker and Clerk,

shall each of them, before they proceed to business, take and subscribe, as well the oath or affirmation of allegiance herein after directed (except where they shall produce certificates of their having heretofore taken and subscribed the same) as the following oath or affirmation, viz.

You do solemnly swear (or affirm) that as a Member of this Assembly, you will not propose, or assent to any bill, vote or resolution, which shall appear to you injurious to the people, nor do or consent to any act or thing whatever, that shall have a tendency to lessen or abridge their rights and priviledges, as declared by the Constitution of this State; but will, in all things, conduct yourself as a faithful, honest Representative and guardian of the people, according to the best of your judgment and abilities. (In case of an oath) So help you God. (And in case of an affirmation) under the pains and penalties of perjury.

[And each member, before he takes his seat, shall make and subscribe the following declaration, viz:

You do believe in one God, the creator and governor of the universe, the rewarder of the good, and punisher of the wicked. And you do acknowledge the scriptures of the old and new testament, to be given by divine inspiration, and own and profess the protestant religion.

And no further or other religious test shall ever hereafter be required of any civil officer or magistrate in this State.]

SECTION 13th.

The doors of the House in which the General Assembly of this Commonwealth shall sit, shall be open for the admission of all persons who behave decently, except only when the welfare of the State may require them to be shut.

SECTION 14th.

The votes and proceedings of the General Assembly shall be printed (when one third of the Members think it necessary) as soon as convenient after the end of each session, with the yeas and nays on any question, when required by any Member; (except where the votes shall be taken by ballot) in which case, every Member shall have a right to insert the reasons of his vote upon the minutes.

SECTION 15th.

The stile of the laws of this State in future to be passed, shall be, *It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont.*

SECTION 16th.

To the end that laws, before they are enacted, may be more maturely considered, and the inconvenience of hasty determinations as much as possible prevented, all bills which originate in the Assembly, shall be laid before the Governor and Council for their revision and concurrence, or proposals of amendment; who shall return the same to the Assembly, with their proposals of amendment, if any, in writing; and if the same are not agreed to by the Assembly, it shall be in the power of the Governor and Council to suspend the passing of such bills until the next session of the Legislature. Provided, that if the Governor and Council shall neglect or refuse to return any such bill to the Assembly, with written proposals of amendment, within five days, or before the rising of the Legislature, the same shall become a law.

SECTION 17th.

No money shall be drawn out of the Treasury, unless first appropriated by act of Legislation.

SECTION 18th.

No person shall be elected a Representative, until he has resided two years in this State: the last of which shall be in the town for which he is elected.

SECTION 19th.

No member of the Council or House of Representatives, shall, directly or indirectly, receive any fee or reward, to bring forward, or advocate any bill, petition, or other business, to be transacted in the Legislature; or advocate any cause, as Council, in either House of Legislation, except when employed in behalf of the State.

SECTION 20th.

No person ought in any case, or in any time, to be declared guilty of treason or felony, by the Legislature.

SECTION 21st.

Every man of the full age of twenty one years, having resided in this State for the space of one whole year next before the election of Representatives, and is of a quiet and peaceable behaviour, and will take the following oath or affirmation, shall be entitled to all the privileges of a freeman of this State.

"You solemnly swear (or affirm) that whenever you give your vote or suffrage, touching any matter that concerns the State of Vermont, you will do it so as in your conscience you shall judge will most conduce to the best good of the same, as established by the constitution, without fear or favour of any man."

SECTION 22nd.

The inhabitants of this State shall be trained and armed for its defence, under such regulations, restrictions, and exceptions, as Congress, agreeably to the Constitution of the United States, and the Legislature of this State, [as the General Assembly shall, by law,] shall direct. The several companies of Militia shall, as often as vacancies happen, elect their Captain and other Officers, and the Captain and Subalterns shall nominate and recommend the field officers of their respective regiments, who shall appoint their staff Officers.

SECTION 23rd.

All Commissions shall be in the name of the freemen of the State of Vermont, sealed with the State Seal, signed by the Governor, and in his absence, the Lieutenant Governor, and attested by the Secretary; which seal shall be kept by the [council] Governor.

SECTION 24th.

Every officer of state, whether judicial or executive, shall be liable to be impeached by the General Assembly, either when in office, or after his resignation or removal for mal-administration. All impeachments shall be before the Governor, or Lieutenant Governor, and Council, who shall hear and determine the same and may award costs; and no trial

or impeachment shall be a bar to a prosecution at law.

SECTION 25th.

As every freeman, to preserve his independence (if without a sufficient estate) ought to have some profession, calling, trade, or farm, whereby he may honestly subsist, there can be no necessity for, nor use in, establishing offices of profit, the usual effects of which are, dependance and servility, unbecoming freemen, in the possessors or expectants, and faction, contention [corruption] and discord among the people. But if any man is called into public service to the prejudice of his private affairs, he has a right to a reasonable compensation; and whenever an office through increase of fees or otherwise, becomes so profitable as to occasion many to apply for it, the profits ought to be lessened by the Legislature. And if any officer shall wittingly and willfully take greater fees than the law allows him, [either directly or indirectly,] it shall ever after disqualify him from holding any office in this State, until he shall be restored by act of Legislation.

SECTION 26th.

No person in this State, shall be capable of holding or exercising more than one of the following offices at the same time, viz. Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Judge of the Supreme Court, Treasurer of the State, Member of the Council, Member of the General Assembly, Surveyor General, or Sheriff. Nor shall any person holding any office of profit or trust under the authority of Congress, be eligible to any appointment in the Legislature, or of holding any executive or judiciary office under this State.

[SECTION XXVII.]

[Any delegate to Congress may be superceded at any time, by the General Assembly appointing another in his stead. No man shall be capable of being a delegate to represent this State in Congress for more than three years in any term of six years; --and no person who holds any office in the gift of congress, shall, during the time of his holding such office, be elected to represent this state in congress.]

SECTION 27th.

The Treasurer of the State shall, before the Governor and Council, give

sufficient security to the Secretary of the State, in behalf of the General Assembly; and each High Sheriff, before the first Judge of the County Court, to the Treasurer of their respective Counties, previous to their respectively entering upon the execution of their offices, in such manner, and in such sums as shall be directed by the Legislature.

SECTION 28th.

The Treasurer's accounts shall be annually audited, and a fair state thereof laid before the General Assembly, at their session in October.

SECTION 29th.

Every officer, whether judicial, executive or military, in authority under this State, before he enters upon the execution of his office, shall take and subscribe the following oath or affirmation of allegiance to this State, (unless he shall produce evidence that he has before taken the same) and also the following oath or affirmation of office, except military officers, and such as shall be exempted by the Legislature.

The oath or affirmation of allegiance.

"You do solemnly swear (or affirm) that you will be true and faithful to the State of Vermont, and that you will not, directly or indirectly, do any act or thing injurious to the Constitution or Government thereof, as established by Convention. (If an oath) So help you God. (If an affirmation) under the pains and penalties of perjury."

The oath or affirmation of office.

"You do solemnly swear (or affirm) that you will faithfully execute the office of for the of ; and will therein do equal right and justice to all men, to the best of your judgment and abilities, according to law. (If an oath) So help you God. (If an affirmation) under the pains and penalties of perjury."

SECTION 30th.

No person shall be eligible to the office of Governor, or Lieutenant Governor, until he shall have resided in this State four years next preceeding the day of his election.

SECTION 31st.

Trials of issues, proper for the cognizance of a Jury, in the Supreme and County Courts, shall be by Jury, except where parties otherwise agree; and great care ought to be taken to prevent corruption or partiality in the choice and return, or appointment of Juries.

SECTION 32nd.

All prosecutions shall commence, By the authority of the State of Vermont; all Indictments shall conclude with these words, *against the peace and dignity of the State*. And all fines shall be proportion[ate]ed to the offences.

SECTION 33rd.

The person of a debtor, where there is not strong presumption of fraud, shall not be continued in prison after delivering up and assigning over, *bona fide*, all his estate, real and personal, in possession, reversion or remainder, for the use of his creditors, in such manner as shall be hereafter regulated by law. And all prisoners, unless in execution, or committed for capital offences, when the proof is evident or presumption great, shall beailable by sufficient sureties; nor shall excessive bail be exacted forailable offences.

SECTION 34th.

All elections, whether by the people or in Legislature, shall be free and voluntary: and any elector who shall receive any gift or reward for his vote, in meat, drink, monies or otherwise, shall forfeit his right to elect at that time, and suffer such other penalty as the law shall direct; and any person who shall directly or indirectly, give, promise, or bestow, any such rewards to be elected, shall thereby be rendered incapable to serve for the ensuing year, and be subject to such further punishment as a future Legislature shall direct.

SECTION 35th.

All deeds and conveyances of land shall be recorded in the town Clerk's office in their respective towns; and, for want thereof, in the county Clerk's office of the same county.

SECTION 36th.

The Legislature shall regulate entails in such manner as to prevent perpetuities.

SECTION 37th.

To deter more effectually from the commission of crimes, by continued visible punishments of long duration, and to make sanguinary punishments less necessary, means ought to be provided for punishing by hard labour, those who shall be convicted of crimes not capital, whereby the criminal shall be employed for the benefit of the public, or for the reparation of injuries done to private persons: and all persons at proper times ought to be permitted to see them at their labour.

SECTION 38th.

The estates of such persons as may destroy their own lives, shall not, for that offence, be forfeited, but descend or ascend in the same manner as if such persons had died in a natural way. Nor shall any article which shall accidentally occasion the death of any person, be henceforth deemed a deodand, or in any wise forfeited on account of such misfortune.

SECTION 39th.

Every person, of good character, who comes to settle in this State, having first taken an oath or affirmation of allegiance to the same, may purchase, or by other just means acquire, hold and transfer land, or other real estate; and after one year's residence, shall be deemed a free denizen thereof, and entitled to all rights of a natural born subject of this State, except that he shall not be capable of being elected Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Treasurer, Councillor or Representative in Assembly, until after two years residence.

SECTION 40th.

The inhabitants of this State shall have liberty in seasonable times, to hunt and fowl on the lands they hold, and on other lands not enclosed; and in like manner to fish in all boatable and other waters (not private property) under proper regulations, to be hereafter made and provided by the General Assembly.

SECTION 41st.

Laws for the encouragement of virtue and prevention of vice and immorality, ought to be constantly kept in force, and duly executed: and a competent number of schools ought to be maintained in each town, for the convenient instruction of youth: and one or more grammar schools be incorporated and properly supported, in each county in this State. And all religious societies, or bodies of men, that may be hereafter united or incorporated, for the advancement of religion and learning, or for other pious and charitable purposes, shall be encouraged and protected in the enjoyment of the privileges, immunities and estates, which they in justice ought to enjoy, under such regulations as the General Assembly of this State shall direct.

SECTION 42nd.

The declaration of the political rights and privileges of the inhabitants of this State, is hereby declared to be a part of the Constitution of this Commonwealth; and ought not to be violated, on any pretence whatsoever.

SECTION 43rd.

In order that the freedom of this Commonwealth may be preserved inviolate forever, there shall be chosen, by ballot, by the freemen of this State, on the last Wednesday in March, in the year *one thousand seven hundred and ninety-nine*, and on the last Wednesday in March, in every seven years thereafter, *thirteen persons*, who shall be chosen in the same manner the Council is chosen, except they shall not be out of the Council or General Assembly, to be called the *Council of Censors*; who shall meet together on the first Wednesday of June next ensuing their election, the majority of whom shall be a quorum in every case, except as to calling a convention, in which two thirds of the whole number elected shall agree: and whose duty it shall be to enquire, whether the Constitution has been preserved inviolate in every part, during the last septenary, (including the year of their service); and whether the legislative and executive branches of government have performed their duty, as guardians of the people, or assumed to themselves, or exercised, other or greater powers than they are entitled to by the Constitution. They are also to enquire, whether the public taxes have been justly laid and collected in all parts of this Commonwealth--in what manner the public monies have been

disposed of--and whether the laws have been duly executed.--For these purposes they shall have power to send for persons, papers, and records--they shall have authority to pass public censures, to order impeachments, and to recommend to the Legislature the repealing such laws as shall appear to them to have been passed, contrary to the principles of the Constitution: These powers they shall continue to have for and during the space of one year from the day of their election, and no longer. The said Council of Censors shall also have power to call a Convention, to meet within two years after their sitting, if there appears to them an absolute necessity of amending any article of this Constitution, which may be defective--explaining such as may be thought not clearly expressed--and of adding such as are necessary for the preservation of the rights and happiness of the people; but the articles to be amended, and the amendments proposed, and such articles as are proposed to be added or abolished, shall be promulgated at least six months before the day appointed for the election of such Convention, for the previous consideration of the people, that they may have an opportunity of instructing their Delegates on the subject.

By Order of Convention, July 9, 1793

Thomas Chittenden, President

[Attest] L.R. Morris, Secretary