

CELEBRATE CONSTITUTION DAY

September 17, 2011

Background

Since May of 1787, delegates had gathered in the State House (Independence Hall) of Philadelphia, PA, to revise the Articles of Confederation, the first governing documents of the United States of America as adopted by the Continental Congress in 1777. After several months of debate and redrafting, delegates voted to design an entirely new framework for the government, the Constitution.

After the Constitution was signed by members of the Continental Congress in September 1787, fierce debates ensued at the state level over issues such as the power of central government and states, and the process of electing representatives. The Constitution was eventually ratified and took effect on June 21, 1788.

The Constitution Today

Today the constitution is housed at the National Archives and Records Administration on Constitution Ave NW [between 7th and 9th St.] in Washington, DC.

Historical Timeline of the United States Constitution

- March 25-28, 1785**
 - The Mount Vernon Conference: Representatives of Maryland and Virginia meet at George Washington's plantation to resolve conflicts over the navigation of the Potomac and Pocomoke Rivers.
- September 11-14, 1786**
 - The Annapolis Convention: New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Virginia meet to discuss uniform trade regulations, but agree to appeal to all states to meet again to discuss broader reforms.
- February 21, 1787**
 - Congress approves convention to amend the Articles of the Confederation.
- May 25, 1787**
 - First Meeting of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.
- May 29, 1787**
 - Edmund Randolph proposes the Virginia Plan.
- July 26, 1787**
 - Constitution submitted to a Committee of Detail, who were appointed to prepare the first formal draft of the constitution.
- August 6, 1787**
 - First Draft of Constitution Presented to Convention
- September 17, 1787**
 - All delegates, except Randolph, Mason, and Gerry, sign the Constitution.