

THE CONSTITUTION AND FORM OF GOVERNMENT

Agreed to by the Delegates of Maryland in free and full Convention assembled, November 8th, Anno Domini 1776.

1. That the Legislature consist of two distinct branches, a Senate, and a House of Delegates, which shall be styled The General Assembly of Maryland.

2. That the House of Delegates shall be chosen in the following manner: All free men (a), above twenty-one years of age, having a freehold of fifty acres of land in the county in which they offer to vote, and residing therein, and all free men having property in this state above the value of thirty pounds current money (b), and having resided in the county in which they offer to vote one whole year (c) next preceding the election, shall have a right of suffrage in the election of delegates for such county. And all free men, so qualified, shall, on the first Monday of October seventeen hundred and seventy seven, and on the same day in every year thereafter, assemble in the counties in which they are respectively qualified to vote, at the court-house in the said counties, or at such other place as the legislature shall direct (d), and when assembled they shall proceed to elect, viva voce (e), four delegates for their respective counties, of the most wise, sensible, and discreet of the people, residents in the county where they are to be chosen one whole year next preceding the election, above twenty-one years of age, and having in the state real or personal property above the value of five hundred pounds current money (f); and upon the final casting of the polls, the four persons who shall appear to have the greatest number of legal votes, shall be declared and returned duly elected for their respective counties (g).

3. That the sheriff of each county, or in case of sickness his deputy, (summoning two justices of the county, who are required to attend for the preservation of the peace,) shall be judge of the election, and may adjourn from day to day, if necessary, till the same be finished, so that the whole election shall be concluded in four days, and shall make his return thereof, under his hand, to the chancellor of this state for the time being (h).

4. That all persons, qualified by the charter of the city of Annapolis to vote for Burgesses (i), shall, on the same first Monday of October, seventeen hundred and seventy-seven, and on the same day in every year for ever thereafter, elect, viva voce (k), by a majority of votes, two delegates, qualified agreeable to the said charter (l); that the mayor, recorder and aldermen, of the said city, or any

(a) Act of November 1809, ch. 83, confirmed by 1810, ch. 33.

(b) Act of November 1809, ch. 83, confirmed by 1810, ch. 33.

(c) Act of November 1809, ch. 83, confirmed by 1810, ch. 33.

(d) The place and time of assembling, according to the act of 1798, ch. 115, confirmed by 1799, ch. 48, to be regulated by law, together with what relates to the judges and manner of holding the elections

(e) Act of November 1809, ch. 83, confirmed by 1810, ch. 33.

(f) Act of November 1809, ch. 198, confirmed by 1810, ch. 18.

(g) See note (d)

(h) The whole of this section is altered by the acts of 1798, ch. 115, and 1799, ch. 48; and every matter relating to the judges, place, time and manner, of holding elections in the city of Baltimore, and the several counties, is hereafter to be regulated by law.

(i) See note (a) to the 2d section.

(k) See note (c) to the 2d section.

(l) See note (f) to the 2d section.