

The drafting of the Constitution required thousands of hours of research, study, and debate by 142 delegates and a highly competent professional staff. The final product that was approved by the Convention on January 8, 1968, and signed two days later reflects this careful thought and deliberation.

The Constitution has been signed by 140 of the delegates. The only delegates who have not yet signed the Constitution are First Vice President James Clark and Edward T. Miller. Delegate Clark was unable to sign because of a broken hand and Delegate Miller because he was seriously ill and hospitalized. It is anticipated that Delegate Clark will sign as soon as he is physically able but Delegate Miller died before he could sign.

The delegates to the Convention do not believe that they drafted an ideal or perfect document, for that would have been an impossible task. Rather, they sought the more realistic goal of producing a sound document which would be acceptable to the great majority of Marylanders and which would offer an improved framework of government with flexibility for the future, but with guarantees that the basic rights of the people be protected.

The contents of the document submitted here will not produce sudden or radical changes in our state government. Government in Maryland will still be divided into

the executive, legislative and judicial branches. The new draft expands rather than curtails the rights of the citizens which are to be protected from governmental interference. Should further constitutional alterations prove necessary in the future, however, the draft document provides for the necessary means to make the changes, just as does the present Constitution.

The differences between the new Constitution and the old are those favored by the delegates in order to make Maryland government more responsible, more efficient and more visible to the citizens it serves. Each of the three branches of the government is strengthened so that together they will have the power to solve modern-day problems without endangering the liberties of the individual citizens of the State. Among the changes are:

The legislature is directed to concentrate on statewide problems and is given the time in which to consider these matters properly.

The governor is given greater control over the executive branch to increase efficiency and effectiveness of government.

The judicial system is changed from a confused pattern of courts with inconsistent powers and duties to a statewide, unified four-level system of courts