

North Carolina Article the First Ratification Trail

Compiled by Patriot Penny Stephens — Nebraska
Submitted to the Article the First Initiative™ Collaborative
Research Archive
August 23, 2026

Original image containing North Carolina's original 1789 copy of the twelve proposed Articles

The four consecutive pages show:

1. "An Act to ratify the amendments to the Constitution of the United States."
2. Article I, containing Article the First's representation language.
3. Articles II through XII.
4. Immediately following Article XII:
"Be it Therefore enacted by the General Assembly of the state of North Carolina...that the said amendments...be held and ratified on the part of this State..."
 1. The certification:
"Read three times and ratified In General Assembly this 22nd day of December A.D. 1789."
James Glasgow then certifies it as:
"a true Copy of the Original Act of the Assembly filed in the Secretary's Office."
This is the documentary connection that was missing:
Article I appears within the act, and the ratifying clause follows the complete twelve-article list without excluding

Article I.

The source is the U.S. Department of State's Documentary History of the Constitution, Volume II—an official printed transcription of North Carolina's certified copy. It is not a color photograph of the original parchment, but it does provide the complete record instead of substituting an editorial omission.

"ratify the Amendments to the Constitution of the United
States."—

Rec^d from the President June 11th 1790

N^o 3

—North Carolina—

State of North Carolina

His Excellency Alexander Martin Esquire Governor,
Captain General and Commander in Chief in and over
the said State

To all to whom these presents shall come

It is certified That the honorable James Glasgow Esquire
who hath attested the annexed Copy of an Act of the
General Assembly of this State was at the time thereof and
now is Secretary of the said State and that full faith and
Credit are due to his Official Acts

Given under my Hand and the great Seal of the State
at Danbury the fourteenth day of Feb: Anno Dom
1790 and in the XIV year of our Independence

By his Excellys Com^d

THO: ROGERS P Sec

An Act to ratify the amendments to the Constitution of
the United States

Whereas the senate and house of representatives of the
United States of America in Congress Assembled on the

[SEAL APPENDANT]
ALEX: MARTIN

fourth day of March did Resolve, two thirds of both Houses concurring that the following Articles be proposed to the Legislatures of the several States as amendments to the Constitution of the United States all or any of which Articles when ratified by three fourths of the said Legislatures to be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the said Constitution

Article I After the first enumeration required by the first article of the Constitution, there shall be one representative for every thirty thousand, until the number shall amount to one hundred, after which the proportion shall be so regulated by Congress, that there shall be not less than one hundred representatives, nor less than one representative for every forty thousand persons, until the number of representatives shall amount to two hundred, after which the proportion shall be so regulated by Congress, that there shall not be less than two hundred representatives, nor more than one representative for every fifty Thousand persons.

Article II No Law, varying the compensation for the service of the senators and representatives, shall take effect until an Election of representatives shall have intervened.

Article III 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 greivaneies.

Article IV A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed

Article V No soldier shall in the time of peace, be quartered

in any House without the consent of the owner, nor in time of War, but in a manner to be prescribed by Law.

Article VI The right of the people to be secure in their persons, Houses, papers, and Effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated; and no Warrants shall issue but upon probable cause supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Article VII No person shall be held to answer for a capital or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same Offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any Criminal case to be a witness against himself; nor be deprived of life liberty or property, without due process of Law; nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation.

Article VIII In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury of the State and district where the Crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by Law; and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation, to be confronted with the witnesses against him to have compulsory process for obtaining Witnesses in his favour, and to have the assistance of Council for his defence—

Article IX. 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 common Law——

Article X. Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted

Article XI. The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Article XII. 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.

Be it Therefore enacted by the General Assembly of the state of North Carolina and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that the said amendments agreeable to the fifth article of the Original Constitution be held and ratified on the part of this State as articles in addition to and amendments of the Constitution of the United States of America.

CHAS JOHNSON S. S.

S. CABARRUS S. H. C.

Read three times and ratified In General Assembly this 22nd day of December A D. 1789
State of North Carolina

I James Glasgow Secretary of the said State do hereby Certify the foregoing to be a true Copy of the Original Act of the Assembly filed in the Secretarys Office

In Testimony whereof I have hereto set my Hand this tenth day of February 1790

J GLASGOW

Together, these pages show Article I through Article XII followed by North Carolina's ratification clause, legislative signatures, December 22, 1789 approval, and James Glasgow's February 10, 1790 certification.

The complete source volume is available here:

Documentary History of the Constitution of the United States, Volume II — Internet Archive

- North Carolina's complete record appears on printed pages 336–339. Use the page arrows to move through all four pages.
- You can also access the complete scanned volume as a PDF:
- Download the complete source volume
- In that PDF, North Carolina's record occupies PDF pages 346–349.

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/93/Documentary_history_of_the_Constitution_of_the_United_States_of_America%2C_1786-1870_%28IA_documentary_histo02unit%29.pdf#page=346



csac.history.wisc.edu > Document Collections > The Creation and Ratification of the Bill of Rights > State Legislative Actions Regarding Congress Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

(Begin copy)

North Carolina, 22 December 1789

Introduction

On 18 November 1789, the delegates to the second North Carolina ratifying Convention began debating the Constitution while sitting as a committee of the whole. Among the committee's papers was a copy of Congress'

twelve proposed amendments to the Constitution. On 20 November, Antifederalist James Gallaway of Rockingham County referenced Congress' proposed amendments saying that they only partially satisfied the first North Carolina Convention's proposal for a bill of rights and structural alterations to the Constitution, but that further amendments were needed before North Carolina should ratify. Gallaway proposed five additional amendments that needed to be considered in a second constitutional convention before North Carolina should ratify the Constitution. The delegates overwhelmingly rejected this latest call for previous amendments to the Constitution.

On 23 November, the last day of the state Convention, the House of Commons (also sitting in Fayetteville) read and approved a bill for the ratification of Congress' proposed twelve amendments to the Constitution. Over the next month the NC bicameral legislature considered various changes to the proposed amendments and a final version of the bill was signed on 22 December 1789. On 10 February 1790, North Carolina Secretary of State James Glasgow certified the authenticity of a copy of the act, which Governor Alexander Martin sent to President George Washington on 14 February 1790.

House of Commons Proceedings, Monday, 23 November 1789

Mr. Hamilton of Edenton, moved for leave & presented a Bill to ratify the amendments to the Constitution of the United States; which was read for the first time, passed and sent to the House [i.e., Senate].

***Senate Proceedings, Tuesday, 24 November 1789
(excerpts)***

Received also [from the House of Commons] a bill to ratify the amendments to the Constitution of the United States . . .

Ordered, that these Bills be read, which being read, were passed the first time in this House and returned.

House of Commons Proceedings, Tuesday, 24 November 1789 (excerpts)

Received from the Senate the following Bill. Endorsed read the first time and passed, to wit: . . . A Bill to ratify the amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

House of Commons Proceedings, Wednesday, 25 November 1789 (excerpts)

Ordered that the following Bills be read for the second time to-morrow, to-wit: . . . A Bill to ratify the amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

House of Commons Proceedings, Thursday, 26 November 1789

Mr. Hamilton moved for leave to withdraw for amendment "the Bill to ratify the amendments to the Constitution of the United States." Ordered that he have leave accordingly.

House of Commons Proceedings, Monday, 30 November 1789

Ordered that the following Message be sent to the Senate: Mr. Speaker & Gentlemen:

We have appointed Mr. Jones and Mr. Hamilton of Edenton, to assist in examining the Engrossed Bills. The Bill to ratify the amendments to the Constitution of the United States, was read the second time, amended, passed and sent to the Senate.

House of Commons Proceedings, Tuesday, 1 December 1789 (excerpts)

Received also, a Bill to ratify the amendments to the Constitution of the United States . . . Endorsed: read the second time and passed

House of Commons Proceedings, Saturday, 5 December 1789

The Bill to ratify the amendments to the Constitution of the United States, was read the third time, amended, passed and sent to the Senate.

Senate Proceedings, Tuesday, 8 December 1789

Received also the bill to ratify the amendments to the constitution of the United States, endorsed "Read the third time, amended and passed."

Ordered, That this bill be read; which being read, was passed the third time and ordered to be engrossed.

Act to Ratify the Amendments to the Constitution of the United States, 22 December 1789

[The act begins with Congress' twelve proposed amendments and its resolution that prefaced them.]

Be it therefore enacted by the General Assembly of the state of North Carolina and it is hereby enacted by the

authority of the same, that the said amendments agreeable to the fifth article of the original Constitution be held and ratified on the part of this State as articles in addition to and amendments of the Constitution of the United States of America.

Chas Johnson S.S.

S. Cabarrus S.H.C.

Read three times and ratified In General Assembly this 22nd day of December AD. 1789.

State of North Carolina

I James Glasgow Secretary of the said State do hereby Certify the foregoing to be a true Copy of the Original Act of the Assembly filed in the Secretary's office

In Testimony whereof I have hereto set my Hand—this tenth day of February 1790

Governor Alexander Martin to President George Washington, Danbury, N.C. 14 February 1790

His Excellency Alexander Martin Esquire Governor, Captain General and Commander in Chief in and over the said State

To all to whom these presents shall come

It is certified That the honorable James Glasgow Esquire who hath attested the annexed Copy of an Act of the General Assembly of this State was at the time thereof and now is Secretary of the said State and that full faith and Credit are due to his Official Acts Given under my Hand and the great Seal of the State at Danbury the fourteenth day of Feb. Anno Dom. 1790 and in the XIV Year of our Independance

New York Gazette of the United States, 12 May 1790

A message was received from the President of the United States [dated 11 June] with a copy of the ratification of the amendments to the constitution by the State of North-Carolina.

***Governor Alexander Martin to President George Washington, Rockingham, N.C.
25 May 1790***

I do myself the honour to transmit you herewith inclosed an Act of the General Assembly of this State passed at their last Session entituled "An Act to ratify the amendments to the Constitution of the United States." Your Communication of the 20th of February last of the Act of Congress entituled "An Act for giving effect to the Acts therein mentioned in respect to the State of North Carolina and other purposes." I have been duely honoured with, and have announced the same to the Citizens of this State—

I have the honour to be with very great respect

***Governor Alexander Martin to North Carolina's U.S. Representatives
Rockingham, N.C., 25 May 1790 (excerpt)***

I was favoured with your Letter of the 11th Ult. a few days ago with sundry Inclosures particularly an Act of Congress for accepting the "Act of Cession of the Western Lands" by you made to the United States—which I shall do myself the Honour to lay before the legislature at their next meeting.

I was informed by some of the Clerks at the adjournment

of the Assembly, that the ratification of the Articles proposed by Congress as amendments to the Constitution of the United States by the Legislature of this State had early in the Session been sent forward to Congress before my coming into the administration, and gave myself no further trouble about it—but thinking that a duplicate of the Cession Act should go forward lest the original might miscarry I sent to Colo. Glasgow for the Exemplification, and he Accordingly transmitted me the same with an authenticated Copy of the ratification act you mentioned which I have done myself the honour to inclose to the President of the United States. . . .

I have the honour to be Gentlemen with very great respect
cite as: John P. Kaminski et al., eds., *The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution*, Vol. XXXVII: Bill of Rights [1] (Madison, Wis.: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2019), 542–46.
[DC10-05-11_North Carolina_22Dec89]

(End of copy)

[North Carolina—December 22, 1789: legislative record and text](#)

North Carolina's General Assembly ratified all twelve Articles on December 22, 1789. The Act declared:
"That the said Amendments, agreeable to the fifth article of the original Constitution, be held and ratified on the part of this State as articles in addition to, and amendment of, the Constitution of the United States of America."
It was authenticated:
"Read three times, and ratified in General Assembly, this

22d day of December, Anno Domini 1789."

Signed:

- Charles Johnson, Speaker of the Senate
- Stephen Cabarrus, Speaker of the House of Commons
- James Glasgow, Secretary

I have not yet found a publicly available archival photograph of **the signed** North Carolina Act itself. The parchment image above is original and includes Article the First, but the four-page legislative record is presently the stronger online evidence of the state's actual ratification.