

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

The following document is provided by the
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DIGITAL LIBRARY
at the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library
<http://legislature.maine.gov/lawlib>



Reproduced from scanned originals with text recognition applied
(searchable text may contain some errors and/or omissions)

DOCUMENTS

PRINTED BY ORDER OF

THE LEGISLATURE,

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING ITS SESSION

A. D. 1837.

AUGUSTA:
SMITH & ROBINSON,.....PRINTERS.

1837.

Access to this volume for scanning was
kindly provided by the Maine State Library.

42

SEVENTEENTH LEGISLATURE.

No. 34.

SENATE.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE MARCH 9, 1837.

THE Committee to whom was referred an order, and petition of Joseph Stockbridge and others, on the subject of referring to the People the question of altering the Constitution, as to the time of the annual meeting of the Legislature, have maturely considered the same—that as the subject has been agitated by previous Legislatures and will probably continue to be in future, until settled by the People—that in different quarters of the State there seem to be strong indications of a desire that the subject should be referred to the people, whose right it is to settle the same, as to the expediency of the change—under these considerations, your Committee see much propriety in recommending the reference, believing that the People ought of right to be the

judges on the question, and that after they have manifested a desire to be permitted to act, we might be considered as wanting in respect for them to withhold the opportunity. Your Committee are of opinion, that such change would shorten the session of the Legislature several weeks; and it will be perceived that there would be a great saving of expense to the State, in fuel, lights, attendance &c. which constitute a very considerable item of charge in a winter session, in a climate like ours—that it would be much more comfortable and convenient, a much greater amount of business could be performed daily. The Committees that have to mature a large share of the business, preparatory to the action of the Legislature, could meet in the morning and prepare their reports for the day; so that the delay occasioned under the present arrangement, would be avoided. It is unnecessary to remind those who have served on Committees in our winter sessions, of the pressure of time, and the inconvenience of attending to their duties, they now experience; the change proposed would be a great saving of time, and add much to the comfort of the members of the Legislature. In addition to these considerations, the expense of members would be much less in travelling to and from the seat of Government, by avoiding the deep snows so common among us in the winter season, frequently detaining members on the way several days, thereby

occasioning delay in legislation. The months of September and October the weather in our climate is probably as pleasant and uniform as in any portion of the season; the extremes of heat and cold are alike avoided, the days are of good length the first part of the term, and when Committees would be employed. We would not legislate for any particular class of men in community, however respectable, against the general good,—yet it is worthy of consideration, that the season proposed is one of more leisure to the farmer than the winter season, as much of his harvesting will be done, hay and grain will be secured, and the labour remaining to be done is such as can as well be entrusted to others, and will demand no greater discretion than does his stock in winter. It would also be necessary to change the time of holding the annual meeting for the choice of State and County officers; and the Committee in fixing upon the first Wednesday of September for the meeting of the Legislature, and also the first Monday in May for the annual meetings for the choice of State and County officers, that this would be a time of comparative leisure to the yeomanry of the State.

There might be many other reasons offered in favor of the proposed measure; but considering it to be the duty of the Legislature, to reflect public opinion, your Committee cannot doubt, that the proposed change will meet the approbation of a

large majority of the people of this State, on whose wisdom and intelligence they most implicitly rely.

Your Committee therefore have directed me to make this Report, with a Resolve which is herewith submitted.

JONATHAN SWIFT, Chairman.

STATE OF MAINE.



RESOLVE to amend the Constitution relative to the time of holding the annual State elections, and the sitting of the Legislature.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives, in Legislature assembled,
That the first section of the third part, of the fourth article of the Constitution, which provides, that the Legislature shall convene on the first Wednesday of January annually, shall be so altered and amended, that the future sessions of the Legislature shall be held on the first Wednesday of September, annually, from and after the first Wednesday of September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty nine; and that the fourth section of the second Article of the Constitution, which provides "that the election of Governor, Senators, and Representatives, shall be on the second Monday of September annually forever," shall be so altered and amended that said election shall be held on the first Monday in May

19 annually from and after the first Monday in
20 May in the year of our Lord one thousand eight
21 hundred and thirty nine. *Provided*, that a
22 majority of the inhabitants of this State who
23 are constitutionally qualified to vote for State
24 officers, shall at their next annual meeting, on
25 the second Monday of September next, decide
26 in favor of such amendments.

Resolved, That it shall be the duty of the
2 Selectmen of the several towns, Aldermen of
3 cities and Assessors of Plantations, in this
4 State, to insert an article in their warrants re-
5 spectively, in which the annual meetings in Sep-
6 tember next, shall be notified and called, to
7 require the inhabitants constitutionally qualified
8 to vote as aforesaid, to give in their votes on the
9 question, whether the proposed amendments to
10 the Constitution shall be made. And it shall
11 be the duty of said Selectmen, Aldermen, and
12 Assessors to receive the votes of said inhabi-
13 tants in such manner as a majority thereof shall
14 decide; and it shall be the duty of the Clerks
15 of the towns, cities, and plantations respectively,
16 to make a true record of the votes so received
17 and counted, and to make a fair copy of the

18 same, which shall be duly attested by the said
19 Selectmen and Clerks of towns, Aldermen and
20 Clerks of cities, and Assessors and Clerks of
21 plantations, and sealed up in open meeting; and
22 the town, city, and plantation Clerks respec-
23 tively shall cause the same to be delivered into
24 the Secretary of State's office, twenty days at
25 least before the first Wednesday of January in
26 the year of our Lord one thousand eight hun-
27 dred and thirty eight, for the purpose of being
28 laid before the Legislature; and if it shall be
29 found that a majority of the votes so returned
30 shall be in favor of the amendments, proposed
31 as aforesaid, said amendments shall be consider-
32 ed as adopted, and shall form a part of the
33 Constitution of the State.

Resolved, That the Secretary of State shall
2 cause this Resolve to be published in all the
3 newspapers printed in this State, for three
4 weeks at least before the second Monday of
5 September next, and also cause copies thereof,
6 with a suitable form of a return, to be sent
7 forthwith to the Selectmen of all the towns, to
8 the Assessors of all the Plantations, and to the
9 Aldermen of the cities in this State. And

10 said Secretary shall, as early as may be in the
11 next session of the Legislature lay all said re-
12 turns before said Legislature, with an abstract
13 thereof shewing the number and state of the
14 votes.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, MARCH 9, 1837.

ORDERED, that 500 copies of this Report and Resolve be
printed for the use of the Legislature.

(Extract from the Journal.)

Attest,

WILLIAM TRAFTON, Secretary.