

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# DOCUMENTS

PRINTED BY ORDER OF

# THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

# STATE OF MAINE,

DURING ITS SESSION

**A. D. 1843.**

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*AUGUSTA:*

WM. R. SMITH & Co., PRINTERS TO THE STATE.



1843.

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TWENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE.

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No. 32.]

[HOUSE.

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RESOLVES

ON THE

AFFAIRS OF RHODE ISLAND.

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[WM. R. SMITH & Co.....Printers to the State.]



## STATE OF MAINE.

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THE joint select committee, to which was referred so much of the Governor's Message as relates to the "affairs of Rhode Island," have had the same under consideration and ask leave to REPORT the following Resolutions, all of which are respectfully submitted.

JOHN J. PERRY, *per order.*



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## STATE OF MAINE.

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RESOLVES relating to the affairs of Rhode Island.

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RESOLVED, That all free governments, are founded  
2 in the authority of the people, that their sovereign  
3 will primarily expressed, is the only true basis upon  
4 which they can be established.

RESOLVED, That all power is inherent in the peo-  
2 ple, that they have a natural, unalienable right to  
3 form and institute governments for their safety and  
4 happiness; and that governments thus formed derive  
5 their just powers from the consent of the governed.

RESOLVED, That whenever a government fails in its  
2 legitimate operations, to secure to the people for  
3 whose benefit it was instituted, their just and equal  
4 rights; they have a right to alter, reform or totally  
5 change the same.

RESOLVED, That a government which restrains the  
2 right of suffrage, and a free and universal expression  
3 of opinions at the ballot box, by making *property* a  
4 necessary qualification to constitute a legal voter; is  
5 anti-republican, unjust and oppressive; and is based  
6 upon principles totally at war with the genius and  
7 spirit of our free institutions.

RESOLVED, That the people of Rhode Island, in  
2 their past attempts to abolish a "*British Charter*," an  
3 instrument worthy only of the corrupt source from  
4 which it emanated—in their efforts to repeal odious,  
5 unjust and oppressive laws; have shown themselves  
6 to be the *true sons* of the patriots of the revolution,  
7 animated by the same pure and holy principles of  
8 patriotism, contending for the same glorious rights.

RESOLVED, That the people of Rhode Island had a  
2 natural, unalienable right, to assemble together and  
3 institute primary meetings, as a preliminary move-  
4 ment to the formation of a *Constitution*, that the pop-  
5 ular will, thus formally expressed became supreme,  
6 without the formal sanctions of then existing laws;  
7 and a Constitution legitimately growing out of these  
8 proceedings, and approved by a majority of the sov-  
9 ereign people at the ballot box, is the only supreme  
10 law of the State.

RESOLVED, That the "*Charter party*" of Rhode Isl-  
2 and, in enacting oppressive and tyrannical laws, in  
3 restraining the liberty of speech,—in depriving the  
4 free and sovereign people of that State of their per-  
5 sonal liberty,—by placing them under bonds, and  
6 thrusting them into loathsome cells and dungeons,—  
7 by shooting them down in the streets—in wantonly  
8 molesting them by a forcible entry into their peacea-  
9 ble dwellings and taking their goods and merchan-  
10 dize as public plunder—in declaring "*martial law*"  
11 in time of peace; have wantonly violated the funda-



12 mental principles of American liberty as laid down in  
13 the Declaration of Independence, and committed an  
14 outrage upon the unalienable rights of the citizens of  
15 that State.

RESOLVED, That the Constitution of the United  
2 States “guarantees to every State in the Union a  
3 republican form of government,” and that in our  
4 opinion President Tyler by ordering out the military  
5 forces of the United States to defeat the people of  
6 Rhode Island in their efforts to establish such a form  
7 of government, transcended the powers given him in  
8 the Constitution; and is obnoxious to the censure  
9 of every friend of civil liberty.

RESOLVED, That the controversy now going on in  
2 Rhode Island is not a collision of men, but of *prin-*  
3 *ciples*—it is not local in its character or limited in its  
4 influence; but affects to a greater or less extent the  
5 interests of the great body of the American people.

RESOLVED, That the “Suffrage party” in Rhode  
2 Island are justly entitled to the *sympathies* of every  
3 friend of equal rights and civil liberty throughout  
4 the Union; and their ultimate success in establishing  
5 a republican form of government in that State  
6 would be hailed as another triumph of the principles  
7 of eternal truth and justice.

RESOLVED, That the governor be requested to trans-  
2 mit a copy of the foregoing resolutions to each of  
3 the governors of the several States.

# STATE OF MAINE.

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, }  
February 14, 1843. }

Laid on the table, and 300 copies ordered to be printed for the  
use of the Legislature.

WM. T. JOHNSON, *Clerk.*