

CONSTITUTION

FRAME OF GOVERNMENT

Agreed upon by the DELEGATES of the People of the State of MASSACHUSETTS-BAY,

CONVENTION

Began and held at Cambridge on the First of September, 1779

AND

Continued by Adjournments to the Second of March, 1780

To be submitted to the Revision of their Constituents, in Order to the completing of the same, in Conformity to their Amendments, at a Session to be held for that Purpose, on the First Wednesday in June next ensuing.

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[7]

PART THE FIRST.

A DECLARATION of the RIGHTS of the Inhabitants of the Commonwealth of MASSACHUSETTS.

Art. **A**LL men are born free and equal, and have I. **A** certain natural, essential, and unalienable rights; among which may be reckoned the right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties; that of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property; in fine, that of seeking and obtaining their safety and happiness.

II. It is the right as well as the duty of all men in society, publicly, and at stated seasons, to worship the SUPREME BEING, the great creator and preserver of the universe. And no subject shall be hurt, molested, or restrained, in his person, liberty, or estate, for worshiping GOD in the manner and season most agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience; or for his religious profession or sentiments; provided he doth not disturb the public peace, or obstruct others in their religious worship.

III. As the happiness of a people, and the good order and preservation of civil government, essentially depend upon piety, religion and morality; and as these cannot be generally diffused through a community, but by the institution of the public worship of GOD, and of public instructions in piety, religion and morality: Therefore, to promote their happiness, and to secure the good order and preservation of their government, the people of this Commonwealth have a right to invest their legislature with

The title page and first articles, the Declaration of Rights, in the first published edition of the 1780 Constitution