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Instructions to the Convention Delegates

Pennsylvania, 30 December 1786

*Act Electing and Empowering Delegates, 30 December 1786*¹

An ACT appointing Deputies to the Convention, intended to be held in the City of Philadelphia, for the purpose of revising the Foederal Constitution.

Sect. I. Whereas the General Assembly of this Commonwealth, taking into their serious consideration the representations heretofore made to the Legislatures of the several States in the Union, by the United States in Congress assembled; and also weighing the difficulties under which the Confoederated States now labour, are fully convinced of the necessity of revising the Foederal Constitution, for the purpose of making such alterations and amendments as the exigencies of our public affairs require: *And whereas* the Legislature of the state of Virginia have already passed an act of that Commonwealth, empowering certain commissioners to meet at the city of Philadelphia, in May next, a convention of commissioners, or deputies, from the different states; and the Legislature of this state are fully sensible of the important advantages which may be derived to the United States, and every of them, from co-operating with the commonwealth of Virginia, and the other states of the confederation, in the said design.

Sect. II. *Be it enacted, and it is hereby enacted by the Representatives of the Freemen of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in General Assembly met, and by the authority of the same,* That Thomas Mifflin, Robert Morris, George Clymer, Jared Ingersoll, Thomas Fitzsimons, James Wilson and Gouverneur Morris, Esquires, are hereby appointed deputies from this state to meet in the convention of the deputies of the respective states of North-America, to be held at the city of Philadelphia, on the second day of the month of May next. And the said Thomas Mifflin, Robert Morris, George Clymer, Jared Ingersoll, Thomas Fitzsimons, James Wilson and Gouverneur Morris, Esquires, or any four of them are hereby constituted and appointed deputies from this state, with powers to meet such deputies as may be appointed and authorised by the other states to assemble in the said convention at the city aforesaid, and to join with them in devising, deliberating on, and discussing all such alterations and further provisions as may be necessary to render the foederal constitution fully adequate to the exigencies of the Union; and in reporting such act or acts for that purpose, to the United States in Congress assembled, as when agreed to by them, and duly confirmed by the several states, will effectually provide for the same.

Sect. 3. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That in case any of the said deputies, hereby nominated, shall happen to die, or to resign his or their said appointment or appointments, the Supreme Executive Council shall be and hereby are empowered and required to nominate and appoint other person or persons in lieu of him or them so deceased, or who has or have so resigned; which person or persons, from and after such nomination and appoint-

ment, shall be, and hereby are declared to be vested with the same powers respectively, as any of the deputies nominated and appointed by this act, is vested with by the same. *Provided always*, that the Council are not hereby authorised, nor shall they make any such nomination or appointment, except in vacation, and during the recess of the General Assembly of this state.

Signed by Order of the House,

THOMAS MIFFLIN, Speaker:

*Enacted into a Law at Philadelphia,
on Saturday, December, the thirtieth, in
the year of our Lord, one thousand seven
hundred and eighty six.*

PETER ZACHARY LLOYD,

Clerk of the General Assembly.

1. On 28 March 1787 the Assembly passed a supplemental act appointing Benjamin Franklin a delegate.

CITE AS: John P. Kaminski et al., eds., *The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution*, Vol. I: Constitutional Documents and Records, 1776–1787 (Madison, Wis.: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 1976), 199–200.