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Georgia, 24 March 1939

Introduction

The Georgia executive council under the state constitution of 1777 received President George Washington's letter of 2 October 1789 transmitting Congress' twelve proposed amendments to the Constitution. Governor Edward Telfair, acting under the new state constitution that went into effect in October 1789, sent a message to the Georgia House of Representatives on 4 November 1789 in which he referred to the receipt of Washington's letter with Congress' amendments. Both legislative houses received Telfair's message on 19 November, and each appointed a committee to consider the message.

On 24 November the Senate appointed two members to a joint committee to consider the amendments. The next day, the Assembly added three of its members to the joint committee. Both the Assembly and the Senate resolved that the further consideration of the amendments "be postponed."

Georgia, like Massachusetts and Connecticut, symbolically ratified the first ten amendments in 1939, the sesquicentennial of Congress' proposal of the twelve amendments that became the Bill of Rights.

Executive Council Proceedings, Augusta, Monday, 31 October 1789

A letter from the President of the United States dated the 2d instant, enclosing a Resolution and a Copy of the amendments proposed to be added to the Constitution of the United States, was read and Ordered to be laid before the Legislature.

House of Representatives Proceedings, Thursday, 4 November 1789

A Message from his Honor the Governor referring to papers, documents, and transactions of the late administration, was received and read.

Ordered, that the same do lie on the Table.

Council Proceedings, Wednesday, 17 November 1789 (excerpts)

The Secretary of the late Executive having informed of certain communications, from the Governor of New York of the 5th. May last . . . and from the President of the United States of the 2nd. October being on the files of the said late Executive

Ordered, That they be removed therefrom, and placed on the files of the present Executive, any order to the contrary notwithstanding.

Ordered, That the communications and Letters above referred to, be postponed for consideration.

Governor Edward Telfair Message to the General Assembly, Augusta, 18 November 1789

Certain communications taken from the files of the late Executive being taken up, the following Message was sent to the General Assembly.

State-House, Augusta, 18th Novr. 1789

The honorable the President of the Senate and the honorable the Speaker of the House of Representatives

I have removed from the files of the late Executive and placed on those of the present, certain communications and letters, which from their tenor, require legislative deliberations, and among which are, a communication from the President of the United States, dated the 2nd. October last, accompanied with a resolution of the National Government, authorizing proposed amendments, by Congress, to the Constitution of the United States,—also a Communication from His Excellency Governor Clinton of the State of New-York, accompanied with a concurrent resolution of the General Assembly of that State on the subject of amendments to the aforesaid Constitution.

One of the Secretaries to the Executive will attend with any original documents appertaining to the Executive Department any separate or joint Committee of either branch, or of the General Assembly, at Chambers provided in the State-house for that purpose, and after reading the same, he is instructed to furnish the necessary extracts or Copies therefrom, and then return the said Originals to their proper deposit—The original proposed amendments to the Constitution of the United States being of a special nature, will be laid before either branch of the General Assembly upon a joint order to that effect[.]

Edwd. Telfair

Adjourned

House of Representatives Proceedings, Friday, 19 November 1789

A Message from His Excellency the Governor, was received and read.

And Ordered to be referred to a Special Committee—and that Mr. Sullivan Mr. Stirk and Mr. Joshua Williams be that Committee.

Senate Proceedings, Friday, 19 November 1789

A Message from the Governor, by Mr. Secretary Urquhart, was received, read, and Committed to Mr. Stephens, and Mr. McNeil.

Executive Council Proceedings, Saturday, 20 November 1789

Ordered, That the proposed amendments to the Federal Constitution, as transmitted by the President of the United States be published in the State Gazette.

Adjourned

Senate Proceedings, Tuesday, 24 November 1789

On the Message from the Governor of the 19th. Instant.

Resolved that Mr. McNeil and Mr. Stephens be a committee on the part of the Senate, to join a committee to be appointed by the house of Representatives on the Subject: and that the House of Representatives be requested to nominate their committee.

Ordered that the Secretary inform them accordingly.

House of Representatives Proceedings, Wednesday, 25 November 1789

A Message from the Senate by their Secretary Mr. Watkins.

Mr. Speaker,

The Senate have appointed Mr. McNeil and Mr. Stephens a committee on their part to join any committee that may be appointed by the house of Representatives on the subject matter of the Governors Message of the 19th. instant and your house is requested to nominate your Committee and then he withdrew.—

Ordered that a Message be sent to the Senate to inform them that this house hath joined Mr. Sullivan Mr. Stirk and Mr. Joshua Williams as their committee on the Subject of his Excellency's Message of the 19th. Instant.

Senate Proceedings, Thursday, 26 November 1789

A Message from the House of Representatives by Mr. Simmons their Clerk, purporting that they had joined Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Stirk and Mr. Williams to the committee of the Senate appointed on the 24th. Instt. on the Subject of the Governors message of the 19th. instant.

Senate Proceedings, Tuesday, 1 December 1789

Mr. McNeil in behalf of the joint committee of both houses, to whom was referred the Governors Message of the 19th November.

Report, That the proposed amendments to the defective parts of the Constitution of the united States, and which are particularly the object of, and referred to in the said Communication cannot be effectually pointed out, but by experience.—therefore Resolved, that the further consideration of the message be postponed. which was accepted.

Ordered that the Secretary do carry the [report] to the House of Representatives for their concurrence.

House of Representatives Proceedings, Wednesday, 2 December 1789

A Message from the Senate by their Secretary Mr. Watkins.

Mr. Speaker,

The Senate have taken under consideration the report of the joint committee of both branches of the Legislature to whom was referred the Governors Message of the 19th November 1789 In the words following—

That the proposed amendments to the defective parts of the constitution of the United States, and which are particularly the object of, and referred to in the said communication; cannot be effectually pointed out, but by experience, therefore.—

Resolved that the further consideration of the message be postponed.—to which the Senate request your concurrence, and then he withdrew.
Ordered that the same do ly on the Table.

***Governor Edward Telfair to President George Washington
State House, Augusta, 5 December 1789***

I do myself the honor to acknowledge your Excellency's communications dated the 2nd, 3d and 8th of October last, and herewith transmit the Executive proceedings thereon.

I have the honor to be, with every sentiment of esteem

***Presentment of the Grand Jury of the Circuit Court for the District of Georgia
Augusta, Ga., 18 October 1791 (excerpts)***

We the Grand federal Inquest for the district of Georgia do make the following presentments. . . .

2. We present the want of a Bill of rights clearly defining the reserved rights of the several States, comprehended in the Guarantee of a Republican form of Government to each state by the constitution of the United States. . . .

Executive Department Proceedings, Thursday, 26 April 1792 (excerpts)

A Communication dated the 1st March 1792 from the Secretary of the United States enclosing . . . the "Ratifications by three fourths of the Legislatures of the several States of certain articles in addition to and amendment of the Constitution of the United States, proposed by Congress to the said Legislatures," was received, read &c

Ordered to be filed and the following communication made

State-house, Augusta, 26th April 1792

Your Communication of the 1st March with its enclosures were this day received. I transmit you the Executive order thereon, and have the honor to be

Sir, Your most Obedt. Servt. Edwd Telfair

Resolutions Adopting the Bill of Rights, 24 March 1939

Whereas, the General Assembly of Georgia has never ratified the first ten amendments to the Constitution of the United States of America, commonly known as "The Bill of Rights"; and
Whereas, the said first ten amendments to the Federal Constitution are fundamental and restricted certain powers of the National Government; and

Whereas, it is fitting and proper that the Journals of Congress show that the people of Georgia, through their General Assembly, are in sympathy with the Bill of Rights of the Federal Constitution:

Therefore, be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring, that the first ten amendments to the United States Constitution be and the same are hereby ratified.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be dispatched to the Clerk of the United States House of Representatives and to the Secretary of the United States Senate.

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