

OFFICIAL.

CONSTITUTION

OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA.

Adopted in Convention at New Orleans, Saturday, March 7, 1868.

PREAMBLE.

We, the people of Louisiana, in order to establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution.

ARTICLE I.

Section 1. All men are created free and equal, and have certain inalienable rights; among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. To secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

Section 2.

All persons, without regard to race, color, or previous condition, born or admitted in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, and residents of this state for one year, are citizens of this state. The citizens of this state are entitled to all the rights and privileges of citizens of the United States; and no state shall deny to any of them the rights and privileges secured by the constitution of the United States.

Section 3.

There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in this state, except for the punishment of crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.

Section 4.

The press shall be free; every man may freely speak, write, and publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of this liberty.

Section 5.

The right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition the government, or any department thereof, shall not be abridged.

Section 6.

Prosecutions shall be by indictment or information. The accused shall be entitled to a speedy public trial by an impartial jury of the parish in which the offense was committed, unless the venue be changed. He shall not be compelled to give evidence against himself; he shall have the right of being heard by himself or counsel; he shall have the right of meeting witnesses face to face, and shall have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor. He shall not be tried twice for the same offense.

Section 7.

All persons shall be bailable by sufficient securities, unless capital offenses, where the proof is evident, or the presumption is strong, or unless after conviction, for any offense punishable with death or imprisonment at hard labor. The privilege of writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended.

Section 8.

Excessive bail shall not be required; excessive fines shall not be imposed; nor cruel or unusual punishments be inflicted.

Section 9.

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures shall not be violated; and no warrants shall issue but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, or the person or things to be seized.

Section 10.

All courts shall be open; and every person for injury done him in his goods, person, or reputation shall have adequate remedy by law. Process of law and justice administered without delay or unreasonable delay.

Section 11.

No law shall be passed fixing a price of manual labor.

Section 12.

Every person has the natural right of worship according to the dictates of his conscience. No religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust.

Section 13.

All persons shall enjoy equal rights and privileges upon any common or public character; and no place of business, or of public amusement, or for which a license is required by the state, parish, or municipal authority, shall be opened to the accommodation and patronage of all persons, without distinction or discrimination on account of race or color.

Section 14.

The rights enumerated in this article shall not be construed to limit or diminish the rights of the people not expressed.

ARTICLE II.

Section 1.

The legislative power of the state shall be vested in two distinct branches: one to be styled the house of representatives, the other the senate, and a general assembly of the state of Louisiana.

Section 2.

The members of the house of representatives shall continue in office for one year from the day of the doing of their several elections.

Section 3.

Representatives shall be chosen on the first Monday in November every two years, and the election shall be completed on the first Monday in January following. The general assembly shall annually on the Monday in January, and on a different day, be appointed by the general assembly.

Section 4.

Every elector under this constitution shall be eligible to a seat in the house of representatives; and every elector who has reached the age of twenty-five years shall be eligible to the senate; provided, that no person shall be a representative or senator at the time of his election be a qualified elector of the representative or senatorial district from which he is chosen.

Section 5.

The members of the house of representatives shall be held in the same manner as established by law.

Section 6.

The representation in the house of representatives shall be equal and uniform throughout the general assembly, and shall be determined by the total population of each parish, as ascertained by the last general census.

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