

# AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONS.

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## CONSTITUTION OF MAINE.

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WE, the people of Maine, in order to establish justice, ensure tranquillity, provide for our natural defence, promote our common welfare, and secure to ourselves and our posterity the blessings of liberty, acknowledging, with grateful hearts, the goodness of the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe in affording us an opportunity so favourable to the design; and imploring his aid and direction in its accomplishment, do agree to form ourselves into a free and independent state, by the style and title of the State of Maine, and do ordain and establish the following Constitution for the government of the same:

### ARTICLE I.

#### *Declaration of Rights.*

§ 1. All men are born equally free and independent, and have certain natural, inherent, and unalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness.

2. All power is inherent in the people; all free governments are founded in their authority, and instituted for their benefit: they have, therefore, an unalienable and indefeasible right to institute government, and to alter, reform, or totally change the same, when their safety and happiness require it.

3. All men have a natural and unalienable right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own consciences, and no one shall be hurt, molested, or restrained in his person, liberty, or estate, for worshipping God in the manner and season most agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience, nor for his religious professions or sentiments, provided he does not disturb the public peace, nor obstruct others in their religious worship;—and all persons demeaning themselves peaceably, as good members of the state, shall be equally under the protection of the laws, and no subordination nor preference, of any one sect or denomination to another, shall ever be established by law, nor shall any religious test be required as a qualification for any office or trust under this state; and all religious societies in this state, whether incorporate, or unincorporate, shall at all times have the exclusive right of electing their public teachers, and contracting with them for their support and maintenance.