

The constitution of 1851 provided for its own amendment by a convention elected expressly for that purpose. The legislature was required at its first session immediately succeeding the returns of every census of the United States, to pass a law for ascertaining the wishes of the people of the State in regard to the call of a convention for the purpose of amending the constitution. This was not done until February 3, 1864.⁵⁷ The constitution went into effect July 4, 1851. It remained in force until 1864, and is remarkable for its extremely democratic features. All state officials from the governor to the constable were to be elected by popular vote. This provision was a reaction against the very conservative and aristocratic character of the constitution of 1776.

⁵⁷ Act 1864, ch. 5.