

A SESQUICENTENNIAL ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ MOMENT

FEBRUARY 16 - 22, 1862

After months of debate, delegates to the First Constitutional Convention of West Virginia unanimously approved a constitution to present to voters for their consideration.

The vote was 49 in favor, none opposed.

The sanctioned proposal addressed some inequities that had long disturbed many western Virginians, including equal apportionment based on population. It also eliminated property requirements for voting and established that all property be equally taxed at face value.

The legislature was directed to establish a public school system under the proposed constitution, which also barred state and local governments from borrowing money.

Delegates and senators of the proposed new state were to receive \$3 a day during the legislative session, plus 10 cents per mile for traveling "the most direct route" to

legislative meetings. The Senate president and Speaker of the House were to be paid \$5 a day.

The proposal voters would consider less than two months later also prohibited lotteries, and banned any citizen from ever holding public office if he challenged someone to a duel or accepted such a challenge.

The draft constitution also afforded the right to vote and hold office only to white male citizens, and established Wheeling as the state capital.

This sesquicentennial moment is brought to you by the West Virginia Sesquicentennial Commission and the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, Archives and History Section.

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