

Right to Alter Form of Government

"Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."

Provided here are links to the Constitutions of all the American States. The purpose of this page is to simply provide quotes of various provisions thereof relating to the power of the people over government.

Alabama

**Our motto: "Audemus jura nostra defendere" that has been translated as:
"We Dare Maintain Our Rights" or "We Dare Defend Our Rights."**

Art. I, § 2: People source of power.

That all political power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority, and instituted for their benefit; and that, therefore, they have at all times an inalienable and indefeasible right to change their form of government in such manner as they may deem expedient.

Art. I, § 25: Right to peaceably assemble and petition for redress of grievances, etc.

That the citizens have a right, in a peaceable manner, to assemble together for the common good, and to apply to those invested with the power of government for redress of grievances or other purposes, by petition, address, or remonstrance.

Art. I, § 26: Right to bear arms.

That every citizen has a right to bear arms in defense of himself and the state.

Art. I, § 35: Objective of government.

That the sole object and only legitimate end of government is to protect the citizen in the enjoyment of life, liberty, and property, and when the government assumes other functions it is usurpation and oppression.

“The time is now near at hand which must probably determine, whether Americans are to be, Freemen, or Slaves; whether they are to have any property they can call their own; whether their Houses, and Farms, are to be pillaged and destroyed, and they consigned to a State of Wretchedness from which no human efforts will probably deliver them. The fate of unborn Millions will now depend, under God, on the Courage and Conduct of this army—Our cruel and unrelenting Enemy leaves us no choice but a brave resistance, or the most abject submission; this is all we can expect—We have therefore to resolve to conquer or die: Our own Country’s Honor, all call upon us for a vigorous and manly exertion, and if we now shamefully fail, we shall become infamous to the whole world. Let us therefore rely upon the goodness of the Cause, and the aid of the supreme Being, in whose hands Victory is, to animate and encourage us to great and noble Actions—The Eyes of all our Countrymen are now upon us, and we shall have their blessings, and praises, if happily we are the instruments of saving them from the Tyranny meditated against them. Let us therefore animate and encourage each other, and shew the whole world, that a Freeman contending for Liberty on his own ground is superior to any slavish mercenary on earth.”

George Washington, General order, July 2, 1776.

Alaska

Article I: Declaration of Rights

SECTION 2. SOURCE OF GOVERNMENT. All political power is inherent in the people. All government originates with the people, is founded upon their will only, and is instituted solely for the good of the people as a whole.

SECTION 6. ASSEMBLY; PETITION. The right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government shall never be abridged.

SECTION 19. RIGHT TO KEEP AND BEAR ARMS. A well- regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed. The individual right to keep and bear arms shall not be denied or infringed by the State or a political subdivision of the State.

"He who attempts to get another man into his absolute power does thereby put himself into a state of war with him... For I have reason to conclude that he who would get me into his power without my consent would use me as he pleased when he had got me there, and destroy me too when he had a fancy to it; for nobody can desire to have me in his absolute power unless it be to compel me by force to that which is against freedom, that is make me a slave."

John Locke, Second Treatise on Civil Government.

Arizona

Art. 2, § 2. Political power; purpose of government

All political power is inherent in the people, and governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, and are established to protect and maintain individual rights.

Art. 2, § 5. Right of petition and of assembly

The right of petition, and of the people peaceably to assemble for the common good, shall never be abridged.

Art. 2, § 26. Bearing arms

The right of the individual citizen to bear arms in defense of himself or the state shall not be impaired, but nothing in this section shall be construed as authorizing individuals or corporations to organize, maintain, or employ an armed body of men.

“[A] State which dwarfs its men, in order that they may be more docile instruments in its hands even for beneficial purposes, will find that with small men no great thing can really be accomplished; and that the perfection of machinery to which it has sacrificed everything, will in the end avail it nothing, for want of the vital power which, in order that the machine might work more smoothly, it has preferred to banish.”

John Stuart Mill’s last paragraph in his essay On Liberty.

Arkansas

Article 2. Declaration of Rights.

§ 1. Source of power.

All political power is inherent in the people and government is instituted for their protection, security and benefit; and they have the right to alter, reform or abolish the same, in such manner as they may think proper.

§ 4. Right of assembly and of petition.

The right of the people peaceably to assemble, to consult for the common good; and to petition, by address or remonstrance, the government, or any department thereof, shall never be abridged.

§ 5. Right to bear arms.

The citizens of this State shall have the right to keep and bear arms, for their common defense.

"Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet depreciate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its waters. This struggle may be a moral one; or it may be a physical one; or it may be both moral and physical; but it must be a struggle! Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did, and it never will. Find out just what people will submit to, and you have found out the exact amount of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them; and these will continue until they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress."

Frederick Douglass, August 4, 1857.

California

ARTICLE 1. DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

SEC. 3. (a) The people have the right to instruct their representatives, petition government for redress of grievances, and assemble freely to consult for the common good.

ARTICLE 2 VOTING, INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM, AND RECALL

SECTION 1. All political power is inherent in the people. Government is instituted for their protection, security, and benefit, and they have the right to alter or reform it when the public good may require.

"The state is a human institution, not a superhuman being. He who says 'state' means coercion and compulsion. He who says: There should be a law concerning this matter, means: The armed men of the government should force people to do what they do not want to do, or not to do what they like. He who says: This law should be better enforced, means: The police should force people to obey this law. He who says: the state is God, deifies arms and prisons. The worship of the state is the worship of force. There is no more dangerous menace to civilization than a government of incompetent, corrupt, or vile men. The worst evils which mankind ever had to endure were inflicted by bad governments."

**Omnipotent Government: The Rise of the Total State and Total War,
by Ludwig von Mises.**

Colorado

Article II Bill of Rights

In order to assert our rights, acknowledge our duties, and proclaim the principles upon which our government is founded, we declare:

Section 1. Vestment of political power. All political power is vested in and derived from the people; all government, of right, originates from the people, is founded upon their will only, and is instituted solely for the good of the whole.

Section 2. People may alter or abolish form of government proviso. The people of this state have the sole and exclusive right of governing themselves, as a free, sovereign and independent state; and to alter and abolish their constitution and form of government whenever they may deem it necessary to their safety and happiness, provided, such change be not repugnant to the constitution of the United States.

Section 13. Right to bear arms. The right of no person to keep and bear arms in defense of his home, person and property, or in aid of the civil power when thereto legally summoned, shall be called in question; but nothing herein contained shall be construed to justify the practice of carrying concealed weapons.

"There are always a few, better endowed than others, who feel the weight of the yoke and cannot restrain themselves from attempting to shake it off: these are the men who never become tamed under subjection and who always, like Ulysses on land and sea constantly seeking the smoke of his chimney, cannot prevent themselves from peering about for their natural privileges and from remembering their ancestors and their former ways.

"These are in fact the men who, possessed of clear minds and far-sighted spirit, are not satisfied, like the brutish mass, to see only what is at their feet, but rather look about them, behind and before, and even recall the things of the past in order to judge those of the future, and compare both with their present condition. These are the ones who, having good minds of their own, have further trained them by study and learning. Even if liberty had entirely perished from the earth, such men would invent it. For them slavery has no satisfactions, no matter how well disguised."

Etienne de La Boetie, in "Discourse on Voluntary Servitude", 1548.

Connecticut

ARTICLE FIRST. DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

SEC. 2. All political power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority, and instituted for their benefit; and they have at all times an undeniable and indefeasible right to alter their form of government in such manner as they may think expedient.

SEC. 14. The citizens have a right, in a peaceable manner, to assemble for their common good, and to apply to those invested with the powers of government, for redress of grievances, or other proper purposes, by petition, address or remonstrance.

SEC. 15. Every citizen has a right to bear arms in defense of himself and the state.

"A bland American civil servant can be as much of a beast as a ferocious concentration camp guard if he does not think about what his actions are doing. Single-minded Inspector Javert is a monster, even though he focused only on his duty. Half the cruelties of human history have been inflicted by conscientious servants of the state. The mildest of bureaucrats can be a brute if he does not raise his eyes from his task and consider the human beings on whom he is having an impact."

Jordan v. Gardner, 986 F.2d 1521, 1544 (9th Cir. 1993).

Delaware

PREAMBLE

Through Divine goodness, all people have by nature the rights of worshiping and serving their Creator according to the dictates of their consciences, of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring and protecting reputation and property, and in general of obtaining objects suitable to their condition, without injury by one to another; and as these rights are essential to their welfare, for due exercise thereof, power is inherent in them; and therefore all just authority in the institutions of political society is derived from the people, and established with their consent, to advance their happiness; and they may for this end, as circumstances require, from time to time, alter their Constitution of government.

ARTICLE I. BILL OF RIGHTS

§ 16. Right of assembly; petition for redress of grievances.

Although disobedience to laws by a part of the people, upon suggestions of impolicy or injustice in them, tends by immediate effect and the influence of example not only to endanger the public welfare and safety, but also in governments of a republican form contravenes the social principles of such governments, founded on common consent for common good; yet the citizens have a right in an orderly manner to meet together, and to apply to persons intrusted with the powers of government, for redress of grievances or other proper purposes, by petition, remonstrance or address.

§ 20. Right to keep and bear arms.

A person has the right to keep and bear arms for the defense of self, family, home and State, and for hunting and recreational use.

"Liberty has never come from Government. Liberty has always come from the subjects of it. The history of Liberty is a history of resistance. The history of Liberty is a history of limitations of Governmental power, not the increase of it."

Woodrow Wilson.

Florida

ARTICLE I, DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

SECTION 1. Political power.— All political power is inherent in the people. The enunciation herein of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or impair others retained by the people.

SECTION 5. Right to assemble.— The people shall have the right peaceably to assemble, to instruct their representatives, and to petition for redress of grievances.

SECTION 8. Right to bear arms.—

(a) The right of the people to keep and bear arms in defense of themselves and of the lawful authority of the state shall not be infringed, except that the manner of bearing arms may be regulated by law.

(b) There shall be a mandatory period of three days, excluding weekends and legal holidays, between the purchase and delivery at retail of any handgun. For the purposes of this section, "purchase" means the transfer of money or other valuable consideration to the retailer, and "handgun" means a firearm capable of being carried and used by one hand, such as a pistol or revolver. Holders of a concealed weapon permit as prescribed in Florida law shall not be subject to the provisions of this paragraph.

(c) The legislature shall enact legislation implementing subsection (b) of this section, effective no later than December 31, 1991, which shall provide that anyone violating the provisions of subsection (b) shall be guilty of a felony.

(d) This restriction shall not apply to a trade in of another handgun.

"And what country can preserve its liberties, if its rulers are not warned from time to time, that this people preserve the right of resistance? Let them take arms ... The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time, with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure."

Thomas Jefferson.

Georgia

SECTION I.

Paragraph VIII. Arms, right to keep and bear. The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed, but the General Assembly shall have power to prescribe the manner in which arms may be borne.

Paragraph IX. Right to assemble and petition. The people have the right to assemble peaceably for their common good and to apply by petition or remonstrance to those vested with the powers of government for redress of grievances.

SECTION II.

Paragraph I. Origin and foundation of government. All government, of right, originates with the people, is founded upon their will only, and is instituted solely for the good of the

whole. Public officers are the trustees and servants of the people and are at all times amenable to them.

Paragraph II. Object of government. The people of this state have the inherent right of regulating their internal government. Government is instituted for the protection, security, and benefit of the people; and at all times they have the right to alter or reform the same whenever the public good may require it.

"Before a standing army can rule, the people must be disarmed; as they are in almost every kingdom in Europe. The supreme power in America cannot enforce unjust laws by the sword; because the whole of the people are armed, and constitute a force superior to any bands of regular troops that can be, on any pretense, raised in the United States."

Noah Webster.

Hawaii

ARTICLE I. Bill of Rights.

POLITICAL POWER

Section 1. All political power of this State is inherent in the people and the responsibility for the exercise thereof rests with the people. All government is founded on this authority.

RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS

Section 17. A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

"We are fast approaching the stage of the ultimate inversion: the stage where the government is free to do anything it pleases, while the citizens may act only by permission; which is the stage of the darkest periods of human history, the stage of rule by brute force."

Ayn Rand, [The Nature of Government](#).

Idaho

ARTICLE I. DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

SECTION 2. POLITICAL POWER INHERENT IN THE PEOPLE. All political power is inherent in the people. Government is instituted for their equal protection and benefit, and they have the right to alter, reform or abolish the same whenever they may deem it

necessary; and no special privileges or immunities shall ever be granted that may not be altered, revoked, or repealed by the legislature.

SECTION 10. RIGHT OF ASSEMBLY. The people shall have the right to assemble in a peaceable manner, to consult for their common good; to instruct their representatives, and to petition the legislature for the redress of grievances.

SECTION 11. RIGHT TO KEEP AND BEAR ARMS. The people have the right to keep and bear arms, which right shall not be abridged; but this provision shall not prevent the passage of laws to govern the carrying of weapons concealed on the person nor prevent passage of legislation providing minimum sentences for crimes committed while in possession of a firearm, nor prevent the passage of legislation providing penalties for the possession of firearms by a convicted felon, nor prevent the passage of any legislation punishing the use of a firearm. No law shall impose licensure, registration or special taxation on the ownership or possession of firearms or ammunition. Nor shall any law permit the confiscation of firearms, except those actually used in the commission of a felony.

"And remember, where you have a concentration of power in a few hands, all too frequently men with the mentality of gangsters get control. History has proven that... All power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely."

Lord Acton.

Illinois

SECTION 1. INHERENT AND INALIENABLE RIGHTS

All men are by nature free and independent and have certain inherent and inalienable rights among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. To secure these rights and the protection of property, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

SECTION 5. RIGHT TO ASSEMBLE AND PETITION

The people have the right to assemble in a peaceable manner, to consult for the common good, to make known their opinions to their representatives and to apply for redress of grievances.

SECTION 22. RIGHT TO ARMS

Subject only to the police power, the right of the individual citizen to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

"No foreign power or combination of foreign powers could by force take a drink from the Ohio or make a track on the Blue Ridge in a trial of a thousand years. At what point then is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer, if it ever reach us it must spring up from among us, it cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen we must live through all time or die of suicide."

Abraham Lincoln.

Indiana

Section 1. Inherent rights

WE DECLARE, That all people are created equal; that they are endowed by their CREATOR with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that all power is inherent in the People; and that all free governments are, and of right ought to be, founded on their authority, and instituted for their peace, safety, and well-being. For the advancement of these ends, the People have, at all times, an indefeasible right to alter and reform their government.

Section 31. Right of assemblage and petition

No law shall restrain any of the inhabitants of the State from assembling together in a peaceable manner, to consult for their common good; nor from instructing their representatives; nor from applying to the General Assembly for redress of grievances.

Section 32. Arms--Right to bear

The people shall have a right to bear arms, for the defense of themselves and the State.

"Find out just what the people will submit to and you have found out the exact amount of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them; and these will continue until they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress."

Frederick Douglas, 1857.

Iowa

ARTICLE I.

BILL OF RIGHTS.

Political power.

SEC. 2. All political power is inherent in the people. Government is instituted for the

protection, security, and benefit of the people, and they have the right, at all times, to alter or reform the same, whenever the public good may require it.

Right of assemblage--petition.

SEC. 20. The people have the right freely to assemble together to counsel for the common good; to make known their opinions to their representatives and to petition for a redress of grievances.

"I apprehend no danger to our country from a foreign foe ... Our destruction, should it come at all, will be from another quarter. From the inattention of the people to the concerns of their government, from their carelessness and negligence, I must confess that I do apprehend some danger."

Daniel Webster, June 1, 1837.

Kansas

Kansas Bill of Rights

2. Political power; privileges. All political power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority, and are instituted for their equal protection and benefit. No special privileges or immunities shall ever be granted by the legislature, which may not be altered, revoked or repealed by the same body; and this power shall be exercised by no other tribunal or agency.

3. Right of peaceable assembly; petition. The people have the right to assemble, in a peaceable manner, to consult for their common good, to instruct their representatives, and to petition the government, or any department thereof, for the redress of grievances.

4. Bear arms; armies. The people have the right to bear arms for their defense and security; but standing armies, in time of peace, are dangerous to liberty, and shall not be tolerated, and the military shall be in strict subordination to the civil power.

"Single acts of tyranny may be ascribed to the accidental opinion of a day; but a series of oppressions, begun at a distinguished period and pursued unalterably through every change of ministers, too plainly prove a deliberate, systematical plan of reducing us to slavery."

Thomas Jefferson.

Kentucky

Section 1

All men are, by nature, free and equal, and have certain inherent and inalienable rights, among which may be reckoned:

First: The right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties.

Second: The right of worshipping Almighty God according to the dictates of their consciences.

Third: The right of seeking and pursuing their safety and happiness.

Fourth: The right of freely communicating their thoughts and opinions.

Fifth: The right of acquiring and protecting property.

Sixth: The right of assembling together in a peaceable manner for their common good, and of applying to those invested with the power of government for redress of grievances or other proper purposes, by petition, address or remonstrance.

Seventh: The right to bear arms in defense of themselves and of the State, subject to the power of the General Assembly to enact laws to prevent persons from carrying concealed weapons.

Section 4

Power inherent in the people – Right to alter, reform, or abolish government.

All power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority and instituted for their peace, safety, happiness and the protection of property. For the advancement of these ends, they have at all times an inalienable and indefeasible right to alter, reform or abolish their government in such manner as they may deem proper.

"A nation can survive its fools, and even the ambitious. But it cannot survive treason from within. An enemy at the gates is less formidable, for he is known and carries his banner openly. But the traitor moves amongst those within the gate freely, his sly whispers rustling through all the alleys, heard in the very halls of government itself. For the traitor appears not a traitor; he speaks in accents familiar to his victims, and he wears their face and their garments, he appeals to the baseness that lies deep in the hearts of all men. He rots the soul of a nation, he works secretly and unknown in the night to undermine the pillars of the city, he infects the body politic so that it can no longer resist. A murderer is less to fear."

Marcus Tullius Cicero, 42 BC.

Louisiana

§1. Origin and Purpose of Government

All government, of right, originates with the people, is founded on their will alone, and is instituted to protect the rights of the individual and for the good of the whole. Its only legitimate ends are to secure justice for all, preserve peace, protect the rights, and promote the happiness and general welfare of the people. The rights enumerated in this Article are inalienable by the state and shall be preserved inviolate by the state.

§9. Right of Assembly and Petition

No law shall impair the right of any person to assemble peaceably or to petition government for a redress of grievances.

§11. Right to Keep and Bear Arms

The right of each citizen to keep and bear arms shall not be abridged, but this provision shall not prevent the passage of laws to prohibit the carrying of weapons concealed on the person.

§26. State Sovereignty

The people of this state have the sole and exclusive right of governing themselves as a free and sovereign state; and do, and forever hereafter shall, exercise and enjoy every power, jurisdiction, and right, pertaining thereto, which is not, or may not hereafter be, by them expressly delegated to the United States of America in congress assembled.

"Human nature is full of riddles; one of those riddles is: how is it that people who have been crushed by the sheer weight of slavery and cast to the bottom of the pit can nevertheless find strength in themselves to rise up and free themselves first in spirit and then in body while those who soar unhampered over the peaks of freedom suddenly lose the taste of freedom, lose the will to defend it, and, hopelessly confused and lost, almost begin to crave slavery?"

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn.

Maine

Article I.

Declaration of Rights.

Section 2. Power inherent in people. 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.

Section 15. Right of petition. The people have a right at all times in an orderly and peaceable manner to assemble to consult upon the common good, to give instructions to their representatives, and to request, of either department of the government by petition or remonstrance, redress of their wrongs and grievances.

Section 16. To keep and bear arms. Every citizen has a right to keep and bear arms and this right shall never be questioned.

The liberties of our country, the freedom of our civil Constitution, are worth defending at all hazards; and it is our duty to defend them against all attacks. We have received them as a fair inheritance from our worthy ancestors: they purchased them for us with toil and danger and expense of treasure and blood, and transmitted them to us with care and diligence. It will bring an everlasting mark of infamy on the present generation, enlightened as it is, if we should suffer them to be wrested from us by violence without a struggle, or to be cheated out of them by the artifices of false and designing men.

Samuel Adams.

Maryland

DECLARATION OF RIGHTS.

Art. 1. That all Government of right originates from the People, is founded in compact only, and instituted solely for the good of the whole; and they have, at all times, the inalienable right to alter, reform or abolish their Form of Government in such manner as they may deem expedient.

Art. 4. That the People of this State have the sole and exclusive right of regulating the internal government and police thereof, as a free, sovereign and independent State.

Art. 6. That all persons invested with the Legislative or Executive powers of Government are the Trustees of the Public, and, as such, accountable for their conduct: Wherefore, whenever the ends of Government are perverted, and public liberty manifestly endangered, and all other means of redress are ineffectual, the People may, and of right ought, to reform the old, or establish a new Government; the doctrine of non-resistance against arbitrary power and oppression is absurd, slavish and destructive of the good and happiness of mankind.

"When all government, domestic and foreign, in little as in great things, shall be drawn to Washington as the center of all power, it will render powerless the checks provided of one government on another, and will become as venal and oppressive as the government from which we separated."

Thomas Jefferson.

Massachusetts

PREAMBLE.

The end of the institution, maintenance, and administration of government, is to secure the existence of the body politic, to protect it, and to furnish the individuals who compose it with the power of enjoying in safety and tranquillity their natural rights, and the blessings of life: and whenever these great objects are not obtained, the people have a right to alter the government, and to take measures necessary for their safety, prosperity and happiness.

Article V. All power residing originally in the people, and being derived from them, the several magistrates and officers of government, vested with authority, whether legislative, executive, or judicial, are their substitutes and agents, and are at all times accountable to them.

Article VII. Government is instituted for the common good; for the protection, safety, prosperity and happiness of the people; and not for the profit, honor, or private interest of any one man, family, or class of men: Therefore the people alone have an incontestable, unalienable, and inalienable right to institute government; and to reform, alter, or totally change the same, when their protection, safety, prosperity and happiness require it.

Article XVII. The people have a right to keep and to bear arms for the common defence. And as, in time of peace, armies are dangerous to liberty, they ought not to be maintained without the consent of the legislature; and the military power shall always be held in an exact subordination to the civil authority, and be governed by it.

Article XIX. The people have a right, in an orderly and peaceable manner, to assemble to consult upon the common good; give instructions to their representatives, and to request of the legislative body, by the way of addresses, petitions, or remonstrances, redress of the wrongs done them, and of the grievances they suffer.

"These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap we esteem too lightly; 'tis dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its good; and it would be strange indeed, if so celestial an article as Freedom should not be highly rated."

Thomas Paine, Dec. 23, 1776.

Michigan

Article I

DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

§ 1 Political power.

All political power is inherent in the people. Government is instituted for their equal benefit, security and protection.

§ 3 Assembly, consultation, instruction, petition.

The people have the right peaceably to assemble, to consult for the common good, to instruct their representatives and to petition the government for redress of grievances.

§ 6 Bearing of arms.

Every person has a right to keep and bear arms for the defense of himself and the state.

"Decency, security, and liberty alike demand that government officials shall be subjected to the same rules of conduct that are commands to the citizen. In a government of laws, existence of the government will be imperilled if it fails to observe the law scrupulously. Our Government is the potent, the omnipresent teacher. For good or for ill, it teaches the whole people by its example. Crime is contagious. If the Government becomes a lawbreaker, it breeds contempt for law; it invites every man to become a law unto himself; it invites anarchy. To declare that in the administration of the criminal law the end justifies the means... would bring terrible retribution. Against that pernicious doctrine this Court should resolutely set its face."

Olmstead v. United States, 277 U.S. 438, 485 (1928).

Minnesota

**ARTICLE I
BILL OF RIGHTS**

Section 1. OBJECT OF GOVERNMENT. Government is instituted for the security, benefit and protection of the people, in whom all political power is inherent, together with the right to alter, modify or reform government whenever required by the public good.

"If you will not fight for the right when you can easily win without bloodshed; if you will not fight when your victory will be sure and not too costly; you may come to the moment when you will have to fight with all the odds against you and only a small chance of survival. There may even be a worse case; you may have to fight when there is no hope of victory because it is better to perish than to live as slaves."

Mississippi

**ARTICLE 3
BILL OF RIGHTS**

SECTION 5.

All political power is vested in, and derived from, the people; all government of right originates with the people, is founded upon their will only, and is instituted solely for the good of the whole.

SECTION 6.

The people of this state have the inherent, sole, and exclusive right to regulate the internal government and police thereof, and to alter and abolish their constitution and form of government whenever they deem it necessary to their safety and happiness; provided, such change be not repugnant to the constitution of the United States.

SECTION 11.

The right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition the government on any subject shall never be impaired.

SECTION 12.

The right of every citizen to keep and bear arms in defense of his home, person, or property, or in aid of the civil power when thereto legally summoned, shall not be called in question, but the legislature may regulate or forbid carrying concealed weapons.

"John Stuart Mill, referring to the morality of assassination of political usurpers, passed by examination of the subject of Tyrannicide, as follows:

'I shall content myself with saying that the subject has been at all times one of the open questions of morals; that the act of a private citizen in striking down a criminal, who, by raising himself above the law, has placed himself beyond the reach of legal punishment or control, has been accounted by whole nations, and by some of the best and wisest men, not a crime, but an act of exalted virtue; and that, right or wrong, it is not in the nature of assassination, but of civil war.'

"Mill, On Liberty and Considerations on Representative Government, p. 14, n. 1."

***Jordan v. DeGeorge*, 341 U.S. 223, 241, 71 S.Ct. 703, 713 (1951): case regarding meaning of "moral turpitude" and dissent noted the above in a footnote.**

Missouri

Article I: BILL OF RIGHTS

Section 1

Source of political power—origin, basis and aim of government.

That all political power is vested in and derived from the people; that all government of right originates from the people, is founded upon their will only, and is instituted solely for the good of the whole.

Section 3. That the people of this state have the inherent, sole and exclusive right to regulate the internal government and police thereof, and to alter and abolish their constitution and form of government whenever they may deem it necessary to their safety and happiness, provided such change be not repugnant to the Constitution of the United States.

Section 9. That the people have the right peaceably to assemble for their common good, and to apply to those invested with the powers of government for redress of grievances by petition or remonstrance.

Section 23. That the right of every citizen to keep and bear arms in defense of his home, person and property, or when lawfully summoned in aid of the civil power, shall not be questioned; but this shall not justify the wearing of concealed weapons.

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes short again and again, who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, who spends himself in a worthy cause, who, at the best, knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place will never be with those timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat."

Montana

ARTICLE II: DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

Section 1. Popular sovereignty. All political power is vested in and derived from the people. All government of right originates with the people, is founded upon their will only, and is instituted solely for the good of the whole.

Section 2. Self-government. The people have the exclusive right of governing themselves as a free, sovereign, and independent state. They may alter or abolish the constitution and form of government whenever they deem it necessary.

Section 6. Freedom of assembly. The people shall have the right peaceably to assemble, petition for redress or peaceably protest governmental action.

Section 12. Right to bear arms. The right of any person to keep or bear arms in defense of his own home, person, and property, or in aid of the civil power when thereto legally summoned, shall not be called in question, but nothing herein contained shall be held to permit the carrying of concealed weapons.

"If you love wealth better than liberty, the tranquillity of servitude better than the animating contest of freedom, go home in peace. We ask not your counsels or your arms. Crouch down and lick the hands of those who feed you. May your chains set lightly upon you. May posterity forget that ye were our countrymen."

Nebraska

Art. 1, §1.

All persons are by nature free and independent, and have certain inherent and inalienable rights; among these are life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, and the right to keep and bear arms for security or defense of self, family, home, and others, and for lawful common defense, hunting, recreational use, and all other lawful purposes, and such rights

shall not be denied or infringed by the state or any subdivision thereof. To secure these rights, and the protection of property, governments are instituted among people, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

Art. 1, §19.

Right of peaceable assembly and to petition government.

The right of the people peaceably to assemble to consult for the common good, and to petition the government, or any department thereof, shall never be abridged.

“Tyranny is the exercise of Power beyond Right, which no Body can have a Right to. And this is making use of the Power any one has in his hands; not for the good of those, who are under it, but for his own private separate Advantage. ... For where-ever the Power that is put in any hands for the Government of the People, and the Preservation of their Properties, is applied to other ends, and made use of to impoverish, harass, or subdue them to the Arbitrary and Irregular Commands of those that have it: There it presently becomes Tyranny, whether those that thus use it are one or many.”

**John Locke Two Treatise of Government (1698) Book II,
Chapter XVIII, § 199.**

Nevada

ARTICLE. 1. - Declaration of Rights.

Sec: 2. Purpose of government; paramount allegiance to United States. All political power is inherent in the people[.] Government is instituted for the protection, security and benefit of the people; and they have the right to alter or reform the same whenever the public good may require it. But the Paramount Allegiance of every citizen is due to the Federal Government in the exercise of all its Constitutional powers as the same have been or may be defined by the Supreme Court of the United States; and no power exists in the people of this or any other State of the Federal Union to dissolve their connection therewith or perform any act tending to impair[,] subvert, or resist the Supreme Authority of the government of the United States. The Constitution of the United States confers full power on the Federal Government to maintain and Perpetuate its existance [existence], and whensoever any portion of the States, or people thereof attempt to secede from the Federal Union, or forcibly resist the Execution of its laws, the Federal Government may, by warrant of the Constitution, employ armed force in compelling obedience to its Authority.

Sec: 10. Right to assemble and to petition. The people shall have the right freely to assemble together to consult for the common good, to instruct their representatives and to petition the Legislature for redress of Grievances.

Sec. 11. Right to keep and bear arms; civil power supreme.

1. Every citizen has the right to keep and bear arms for security and defense, for lawful hunting and recreational use and for other lawful purposes.

2. The military shall be subordinate to the civil power; No standing army shall be maintained by this State in time of peace, and in time of War, no appropriation for a standing army shall be for a longer time than two years.

“The militia is the natural defence of a free country against sudden foreign invasions, domestic insurrections, and domestic usurpations of power by rulers. ... The right of the citizens to keep and bear arms has justly been considered, as the palladium of the liberties of a republic; since it offers a strong moral check against the usurpation and arbitrary power of rulers; and will generally, even if these are successful in the first instance, enable the people to resist and triumph over them.”

Joseph Story, Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States (Fifth Edition, 1897). Volume 2 § 1897 at 646.

New Hampshire

PART FIRST- BILL OF RIGHTS

Bill of Rights

Article 1. [Equality of Men; Origin and Object of Government.] All men are born equally free and independent; therefore, all government of right originates from the people, is founded in consent, and instituted for the general good.

[Art.] 2-a. [The Bearing of Arms.] All persons have the right to keep and bear arms in defense of themselves, their families, their property and the state.

[Art.] 7. [State Sovereignty.] The people of this state have the sole and exclusive right of governing themselves as a free, sovereign, and independent state; and do, and forever hereafter shall, exercise and enjoy every power, jurisdiction, and right, pertaining thereto, which is not, or may not hereafter be, by them expressly delegated to the United States of America in congress assembled.

[Art.] 10. [Right of Revolution.] Government being instituted for the common benefit, protection, and security, of the whole community, and not for the private interest or emolument of any one man, family, or class of men; therefore, whenever the ends of government are perverted, and public liberty manifestly endangered, and all other means of redress are ineffectual, the people may, and of right ought to reform the old, or establish a new government. The doctrine of nonresistance against arbitrary power, and oppression,

is absurd, slavish, and destructive of the good and happiness of mankind.

[Art.] 32. [Rights of Assembly, Instruction, and Petition.] The people have a right, in an orderly and peaceable manner, to assemble and consult upon the common good, give instructions to their representatives, and to request of the legislative body, by way of petition or remonstrance, redress of the wrongs done them, and of the grievances they suffer.

"They rattle their chains to boast of their freedom."

Dresden James.

[New Jersey](#)

ARTICLE I RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES

1. All persons are by nature free and independent, and have certain natural and unalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness.

2. a. All political power is inherent in the people. Government is instituted for the protection, security, and benefit of the people, and they have the right at all times to alter or reform the same, whenever the public good may require it.

18. The people have the right freely to assemble together, to consult for the common good, to make known their opinions to their representatives, and to petition for redress of grievances.

"In Germany they came first for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for Catholics, and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me, and by that time no one was left to speak up."

Protestant minister Martin Neimoller.

[New Mexico](#)

ARTICLE II

Sec. 2. [Popular sovereignty.]

All political power is vested in and derived from the people: all government of right originates with the people, is founded upon their will and is instituted solely for their good.

Sec. 3. [Right of self-government.]

The people of the state have the sole and exclusive right to govern themselves as a free, sovereign and independent state.

Sec. 6. [Right to bear arms.]

No law shall abridge the right of the citizen to keep and bear arms for security and defense, for lawful hunting and recreational use and for other lawful purposes, but nothing herein shall be held to permit the carrying of concealed weapons. No municipality or county shall regulate, in any way, an incident of the right to keep and bear arms.

War is an ugly thing but not the ugliest of things; the decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feelings which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse. A man who has nothing for which he is willing to fight, nothing which is more important than his own personal safety, is a miserable creature and has no chance of being free unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself.

John Stuart Mill.

New York

Nothing regarding this matter, and thus these quotes are relevant for New York:

"Those who are willing to sacrifice their freedoms for a measure of security, deserve neither."

* * *

"History records that the money changers have used every form of abuse, intrigue, deceit, and violent means possible to maintain their control over governments by controlling money and its issuance."

North Carolina

ARTICLE I: DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

Sec. 2. Sovereignty of the people.

All political power is vested in and derived from the people; all government of right originates from the people, is founded upon their will only, and is instituted solely for the good of the whole.

Sec. 3. Internal government of the State.

The people of this State have the inherent, sole, and exclusive right of regulating the internal government and police thereof, and of altering or abolishing their Constitution and form of government whenever it may be necessary to their safety and happiness; but every such right shall be exercised in pursuance of law and consistently with the Constitution of the United States.

Sec. 12. Right of assembly and petition.

The people have a right to assemble together to consult for their common good, to instruct their representatives, and to apply to the General Assembly for redress of grievances; but secret political societies are dangerous to the liberties of a free people and shall not be tolerated.

Sec. 30. Militia and the right to bear arms.

A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed; and, as standing armies in time of peace are dangerous to liberty, they shall not be maintained, and the military shall be kept under strict subordination to, and governed by, the civil power. Nothing herein shall justify the practice of carrying concealed weapons, or prevent the General Assembly from enacting penal statutes against that practice.

"Rebellion to Tyrants is Obedience to God."

[North Dakota](#)

ARTICLE I

DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

Section 1. All individuals are by nature equally free and independent and have certain inalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty; acquiring, possessing and protecting property and reputation; pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness; and to keep and bear arms for the defense of their person, family, property, and the state, and for lawful hunting, recreational, and other lawful purposes, which shall not be infringed.

Section 2. All political power is inherent in the people. Government is instituted for the protection, security and benefit of the people, and they have a right to alter or reform the same whenever the public good may require.

"The natural progress of things is for liberty to yield and government to gain ground."

Ohio

Article 1 - Bill of Rights

§ 1.02 Right to alter, reform, or abolish government, and repeal special privileges (1851)

All political power is inherent in the people. Government is instituted for their equal protection and benefit, and they have the right to alter, reform, or abolish the same, whenever they may deem it necessary; and no special privileges or immunities shall ever be granted, that may not be altered, revoked, or repealed by the general assembly.

§ 1.03 Right to assemble (1851)

The people have the right to assemble together, in a peaceable manner, to consult for their common good; to instruct their representatives; and to petition the general assembly for the redress of grievances.

§ 1.04 Bearing arms; standing armies; military powers (1851)

The people have the right to bear arms for their defense and security; but standing armies, in time of peace, are dangerous to liberty, and shall not be kept up; and the military shall be in strict subordination to the civil power.

"I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform them."

Thomas Jefferson.

Oklahoma

Article II: BILL OF RIGHTS

Section II-1: Political power - Purpose of government - Alteration or reformation.

All political power is inherent in the people; and government is instituted for their

protection, security, and benefit, and to promote their general welfare; and they have the right to alter or reform the same whenever the public good may require it: Provided, such change be not repugnant to the Constitution of the United States.

Section II-3: Right of assembly and petition.

The people have the right peaceably to assemble for their own good, and to apply to those invested with the powers of government for redress of grievances by petition, address, or remonstrance.

Section II-26: Bearing arms - Carrying weapons.

The right of a citizen to keep and bear arms in defense of his home, person, or property, or in aid of the civil power, when thereunto legally summoned, shall never be prohibited; but nothing herein contained shall prevent the Legislature from regulating the carrying of weapons.

"I don't make jokes. I just watch the government and report the facts."

"Be thankful we're not getting all the government we're paying for."

"The trouble with practical jokes is that very often they get elected."

"If you ever injected truth into politics you have no politics."

"Next to guinea pigs, taxes have been the most prolific animal."

Will Rogers.

Oregon

ARTICLE I BILL OF RIGHTS

Section 1. Natural rights inherent in people. We declare that all men, when they form a social compact are equal in right: that all power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority, and instituted for their peace, safety, and happiness; and they have at all times a right to alter, reform, or abolish the government in such manner as they may think proper.

Section 27. Right to bear arms; military subordinate to civil power. The people shall have the right to bear arms for the defence of themselves, and the State, but the Military shall be kept in strict subordination to the civil power[.]

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

Pennsylvania

ARTICLE I

DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

Section 2. All power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority and instituted for their peace, safety and happiness. For the advancement of these ends they have at all times an inalienable and indefeasible right to alter, reform or abolish their government in such manner as they may think proper.

Section 20. The citizens have a right in a peaceable manner to assemble together for their common good, and to apply to those invested with the powers of government for redress of grievances or other proper purposes by petition, address or remonstrance.

Section 21. The right of the citizens to bear arms in defense of themselves and the State shall not be questioned.

"After having thus successively taken each member of the community in its powerful grasp and fashioned him at will, the supreme power then extends its arm over the whole community. It covers the surface of society with a network of small, complicated rules, minute and uniform, through which the most original minds and the most energetic characters cannot penetrate, to rise above the crowd. The will of man is not shattered, but softened, bent, and guided; men seldom forced by it to act, but they are constantly restrained from acting. Such a power does not destroy, but it prevents existence; it does not tyrannize, but it compresses, enervates, extinguishes, and stupefies a people, till each nation is reduced to nothing better than a flock of timid and industrious animals, of which the government is the shepherd."

Alexis de Tocqueville.

Rhode Island

ARTICLE I

DECLARATION OF CERTAIN CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS AND PRINCIPLES

Section 1. Right to make and alter Constitution – Constitution obligatory upon all. – In the words of the Father of his Country, we declare that "the basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and alter their constitutions of government; but that the constitution which at any time exists, till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all."

Section 21. Right to assembly – Redress of grievances – Freedom of speech. – The citizens have a right in a peaceable manner to assembly for their common good, and to apply to those invested with the powers of government, for redress of grievances, or for other purposes, by petition, address, or remonstrance. No law abridging the freedom of speech shall be enacted.

Section 22. Right to bear arms. – The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

"As nightfall does not come at once, neither does oppression. In both instances there is a twilight when everything remains seemingly unchanged. And it is in such twilight that we all must be most aware of change in the air - however slight - lest we become unwitting victims of the darkness."

William O. Douglas, Supreme Court Justice.

South Carolina

ARTICLE I.

DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

SECTION 1. Political power in people.

All political power is vested in and derived from the people only, therefore, they have the right at all times to modify their form of government.

SECTION 20. Right to keep and bear arms; armies; military power subordinate to civil authority; how soldiers quartered.

A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed. As, in times of peace, armies are dangerous to liberty, they shall not be maintained without the consent of the General Assembly. The military power of the State shall always be held in subordination to the civil authority and be governed by it. No soldier shall in time of peace be quartered in any house without the consent of the owner nor in time of war but in the manner prescribed by law.

Sometimes the law defends plunder and participates in it. Thus the beneficiaries are spared the shame and danger that their acts would otherwise involve... But how is this legal plunder to be identified? Quite simply. See if the law takes from some persons what belongs to them and gives it to the other persons to whom it doesn't belong. See if the law benefits one citizen at the expense of another by doing what the citizen himself cannot do without committing a crime. Then abolish that law without delay ... No legal plunder; this is the principle of justice, peace, order, stability, harmony and logic.

Frederic Bastiat.

South Dakota

ARTICLE VI BILL OF RIGHTS

§ 1. Inherent rights. All men are born equally free and independent, and have certain inherent rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring and protecting property and the pursuit of happiness. To secure these rights governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed

§ 4. Right of petition and peaceable assembly. The right of petition, and of the people peaceably to assemble to consult for the common good and make known their opinions, shall never be abridged.

§ 24. Right to bear arms. The right of the citizens to bear arms in defense of themselves and the state shall not be denied.

§ 26. Power inherent in people – Alteration in form of government – Inseparable part of Union. All political power is inherent in the people, and all free government is founded on their authority, and is instituted for their equal protection and benefit, and they have the right in lawful and constituted methods to alter or reform their forms of government in such manner as they may think proper. And the state of South Dakota is an inseparable part of the American Union and the Constitution of the United States is the supreme law of the land.

"You can fight and beat revolutions as you can fight and beat nations. You can kill a man, but you can't kill a rebel. For the proper rebel has an ideal of living, while your ideal is to kill him so that you may preserve yourself. And the reason why no revolution has ever been beaten is that rebels die for something worth dying for, the future, but their enemies only die to preserve the past, and the makers of history are always stronger than the makers of empires."

Tennessee

ARTICLE I DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

Sec. 23. That the citizens have a right, in a peaceable manner, to assemble together for their common good, to instruct their representatives, and to apply to those invested with the powers of government for redress of grievances, or other purposes, by address or remonstrance.

Sec. 24. That the sure and certain defense of a free people, is a well regulated militia; and, as standing armies in time of peace are dangerous to freedom, they ought to be avoided as far as the circumstances and safety of the community will admit; and that in all cases the military shall be kept in strict subordination to the civil authority.

Sec. 26. That the citizens of this State have a right to keep and to bear arms for the common defense; but the legislature shall have power, by law, to regulate the wearing of arms with a view to prevent crime.

"This case involves a cancer in our body politic. It is a measure of the disease which afflicts us. Army surveillance, like Army regimentation, is at war with the principles of the First Amendment. Those who already walk submissively will say there is no cause for alarm. But submissiveness is not our heritage. The First Amendment was designed to allow rebellion to remain as our heritage. The Constitution was designed to keep government off the backs of the people. The Bill of Rights was added to keep the precincts of belief and expression, of the press, of political and social activities free from surveillance. The Bill of Rights was designed to keep agents of government and official eavesdroppers away from assemblies of people. The aim was to allow men to be free and independent and to assert their rights against government. There can be no influence more paralyzing of that objective than Army surveillance. When an intelligence officer looks over every nonconformist's shoulder in the library, or walks invisibly by his side in a picket line, or infiltrates his club, the America once extolled as the voice of liberty heard around the world no longer is cast in the image which Jefferson and Madison designed, but more in

the Russian image..."

Laird v. Tatum, 408 U.S. 1, 28, 92 S.Ct. 2318, 2333 (1972)(Dissent by Douglas).

Texas

Article 1 - BILL OF RIGHTS

Section 2 - INHERENT POLITICAL POWER; REPUBLICAN FORM OF GOVERNMENT

All political power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority, and instituted for their benefit. The faith of the people of Texas stands pledged to the preservation of a republican form of government, and, subject to this limitation only, they have at all times the inalienable right to alter, reform or abolish their government in such manner as they may think expedient.

Section 23 - RIGHT TO KEEP AND BEAR ARMS

Every citizen shall have the right to keep and bear arms in the lawful defense of himself or the State; but the Legislature shall have power, by law, to regulate the wearing of arms, with a view to prevent crime.

Section 27 - RIGHT OF ASSEMBLY; PETITION FOR REDRESS OF GRIEVANCES

The citizens shall have the right, in a peaceable manner, to assemble together for their common good; and apply to those invested with the powers of government for redress of grievances or other purposes, by petition, address or remonstrance.

"I often wonder whether we do not rest our hopes too much upon constitutions, upon laws and upon courts. These are false hopes, believe me, these are false hopes. Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can save it; no constitution, no law, no court can even do much to help it. While it lies there, it needs no constitution, no law, no court to save it."

Judge Learned Hand.

Utah

Article 01 – Declaration of Rights

Article I, Section 1. [Inherent and inalienable rights.]

All men have the inherent and inalienable right to enjoy and defend their lives and liberties; to acquire, possess and protect property; to worship according to the dictates of

their consciences; to assemble peaceably, protest against wrongs, and petition for redress of grievances; to communicate freely their thoughts and opinions, being responsible for the abuse of that right.

Article I, Section 2. [All political power inherent in the people.]

All political power is inherent in the people; and all free governments are founded on their authority for their equal protection and benefit, and they have the right to alter or reform their government as the public welfare may require.

Article I, Section 6. [Right to bear arms.]

The individual right of the people to keep and bear arms for security and defense of self, family, others, property, or the state, as well as for other lawful purposes shall not be infringed; but nothing herein shall prevent the Legislature from defining the lawful use of arms.

"God grants liberty only to those who love it, and are always ready to guard and defend it."

Vermont

CHAPTER I. A DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE STATE OF VERMONT

Article 7. [Government for the people; they may change it]

That government is, or ought to be, instituted for the common benefit, protection, and security of the people, nation, or community, and not for the particular emolument or advantage of any single person, family, or set of persons, who are a part only of that community; and that the community hath an indubitable, unalienable, and inalienable right, to reform or alter government, in such manner as shall be, by that community, judged most conducive to the public weal.

Article 16. [Right to bear arms; standing armies; military power subordinate to civil]

That the people have a right to bear arms for the defence of themselves and the State-- and as standing armies in time of peace are dangerous to liberty, they ought not to be kept up; and that the military should be kept under strict subordination to and governed by the civil power.

Article 20. [Right to assemble, instruct and petition]

That the people have a right to assemble together to consult for their common good – to instruct their Representatives – and to apply to the Legislature for redress of grievances, by address, petition or remonstrance.

"Those who won our independence were not cowards. They did not fear political change. They did not exalt order at the cost of liberty."

***Whitney v. California*, 274 U.S. 357, 377, 47 S.Ct. 641, 648-49 (1927).**

Virginia

ARTICLE I - Bill of Rights

Section 3. Government instituted for common benefit.

That government is, or ought to be, instituted for the common benefit, protection, and security of the people, nation, or community; of all the various modes and forms of government, that is best which is capable of producing the greatest degree of happiness and safety, and is most effectually secured against the danger of maladministration; and, whenever any government shall be found inadequate or contrary to these purposes, a majority of the community hath an indubitable, inalienable, and indefeasible right to reform, alter, or abolish it, in such manner as shall be judged most conducive to the public weal.

Section 12. Freedom of speech and of the press; right peaceably to assemble, and to petition.

That the freedoms of speech and of the press are among the great bulwarks of liberty, and can never be restrained except by despotic governments; that any citizen may freely speak, write, and publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right; that the General Assembly shall not pass any law abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, nor the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for the redress of grievances.

Section 13. Militia; standing armies; military subordinate to civil power.

That a well regulated militia, composed of the body of the people, trained to arms, is the proper, natural, and safe defense of a free state, therefore, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed; that standing armies, in time of peace, should be avoided as dangerous to liberty; and that in all cases the military should be under strict subordination to, and governed by, the civil power.

"If we run into such debts as that we must be taxed in our meat and in our drink, in our necessaries and our comforts, in our labors and our amusements, for our callings and our creeds, as the people of England are, our people, like them, must come to labor sixteen hours in the twenty-four, and give the earnings of fifteen of these to the government for their debts and daily expenses;

And the sixteenth being insufficient to afford us bread, we must live, as they do now, on oatmeal and potatoes, have no time to think, no means of calling the mismanagers to account; but be glad to obtain subsistence by hiring ourselves to rivet their chains around the necks of our fellow sufferers;

And this is the tendency of all human governments. A departure from principle in one instance becomes a precedent for a second, that second for a third, and so on 'til the bulk of the society is reduced to be mere automatons of misery, to have no sensibilities left but for sinning and suffering...

And the forehorse of this frightful team is public debt. Taxation follows that, and in its train wretchedness and oppression."

Thomas Jefferson.

Washington

ARTICLE I DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

SECTION 1 POLITICAL POWER. All political power is inherent in the people, and governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, and are established to protect and maintain individual rights.

SECTION 4 RIGHT OF PETITION AND ASSEMBLAGE. The right of petition and of the people peaceably to assemble for the common good shall never be abridged.

SECTION 24 RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS. The right of the individual citizen to bear arms in defense of himself, or the state, shall not be impaired, but nothing in this section shall be construed as authorizing individuals or corporations to organize, maintain or employ an armed body of men.

"Government is not reason, it is not eloquence, it is force! Like fire, it is a troublesome servant and a fearful master."

West Virginia

ARTICLE III. Bill of rights.

3-3. Rights reserved to people.

Government is instituted for the common benefit, protection and security of the people, nation or community. Of all its various forms that is the best, which is capable of producing the greatest degree of happiness and safety, and is most effectually secured against the danger of maladministration; and when any government shall be found inadequate or contrary to these purposes, a majority of the community has an indubitable, inalienable, and infeasible right to reform, alter or abolish it in such manner as shall be judged most conducive to the public weal.

3-16. Right of public assembly held inviolate.

The right of the people to assemble in a peaceable manner, to consult for the common good, to instruct their representatives, or to apply for redress of grievances, shall be held inviolate.

3-22. Right to keep and bear arms.

A person has the right to keep and bear arms for the defense of self, family, home and state, and for lawful hunting and recreational use.

“It is in vain, sir to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, peace, peace - but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle?”

“What is it the gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery. Forbid it, Almighty God - I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!”

Wisconsin

ARTICLE I. DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

Section 1. Equality; inherent rights.

All people are born equally free and independent, and have certain inherent rights; among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; to secure these rights, governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

Section 4. Right to assemble and petition.

The right of the people peaceably to assemble, to consult for the common good, and to petition the government, or any department thereof, shall never be abridged.

Section 25. Right to keep and bear arms.

The people have the right to keep and bear arms for security, defense, hunting, recreation or any other lawful purpose.

"Guard with jealous attention the public liberty. Suspect everyone who approaches that jewel. Unfortunately, nothing will preserve it but downright force. Whenever you give up that force, you are inevitably ruined."

Patrick Henry, speech against the federal Constitution, June 5, 1788.

Wyoming

ARTICLE 1. DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

97-1-001. Power inherent in the people.

All power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority, and instituted for their peace, safety and happiness; for the advancement of these ends they have at all times an inalienable and indefeasible right to alter, reform or abolish the government in such manner as they may think proper.

97-1-021. Right of petition and peaceable assembly.

The right of petition, and of the people peaceably to assemble to consult for the common good, and to make known their opinions, shall never be denied or abridged.

97-1-024. Right to bear arms.

The right of citizens to bear arms in defense of themselves and of the state shall not be denied.

"The accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive, and judiciary, in the same hands, whether of one, a few, or many, and whether hereditary, self-appointed, or elective, may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny."

James Madison, Federalist Papers No. 47.