

Enabling Act for the District of Columbia

An act to enable the people of the District of Columbia to form a constitution and State government and for the admission of such State into the Union on an equal footing with the original States, and for other purposes.

Section I:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, that the inhabitants of the District of Columbia be, and they are hereby, authorized to form for themselves a Constitution and State government, and to assume such name as they shall deem proper, and the said State, when formed, shall be admitted into the Union upon the same footing with the original States in all respects whatever.

Section II:

And be it further enacted, that the said State shall consist of all the territory included within the following boundaries, to wit: Bounded on the northwest and northeast and southeast by the Maryland line, on the west and southwest line of Virginia; Provided, That Congress shall be at liberty at any time hereafter either to attach all the territory lying east of the Virginia line to the territorial line, and southeast, southwest, and northwest of the Maryland line, to the aforesaid State, or dispose of it otherwise, in conformity with the fifth article of compact between the original States and the people and States to be formed in the territory east of the river Potomac.

Section III:

And be it further enacted, That all male citizens of the United States, who shall have arrived at full age and reside within the said territory, and all persons having in other respects the legal qualifications to vote for Representatives of the General Assembly of the territory, be, and they are hereby, authorized to choose Representatives to form a convention, who shall be appointed amongst the several counties within the territory aforementioned, in a ratio of one Representative to every twelve hundred inhabitants of each county, according to the enumeration taken under the authority of the United States, as near as may be; and the elections for the Representatives aforesaid shall take place on the

second Tuesday of November next, the time fixed by a law of the territory entitled "An act to ascertain the number of inhabitants of the age of eighteen in the territory of the United States east of the river Potomac, and to regulate elections of Representatives for the same," for electing Representatives to the General Assembly, and shall be held and conducted in the same manner as is provided in the aforesaid act, except that the qualifications of electors shall be as herein specified.

Section IV:

And be it further enacted, That the members of the convention, thus duly elected, be, and they are hereby, authorized to meet at the Capital on the first Monday in November next; which Convention, when met, shall first determine, by a majority of the whole number elected, whether it be or be not expedient at that time to form a constitution and State government for the people within the said territory, and if it be determined to be expedient, the convention shall be, and hereby are, authorized to form a constitution and State government, or, if it be deemed more expedient, the said convention shall provide by ordinance for electing Representatives to form a constitution or frame of government; which said Representatives shall be chosen in such manner and in such proportion, and shall meet at such time and place, as shall be prescribed by the said ordinance; and shall form for the people of the said State a constitution and State government, provided the same shall be republican, and not repugnant to the ordinance of the thirteenth of July, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven, between the original States and the people and the States of the territory northwest of the river Ohio.

Section V:

And be it further enacted, That until the next general census shall be taken, the said State shall be entitled to two Representatives in the House of Representatives of the United States, and two Senators in the Senate of the United States.