

The National Constitution of The Junior State of America

Preamble

We, the members of the Junior State of America, in order to educate our peers in the processes of democracy, to develop an understanding of current political issues, to encourage responsible leadership, and to ensure a strong, national Junior State program, do hereby establish this Constitution of the Junior State of America.

Article I

The name of this organization shall be the Junior State of America, which may be abbreviated as J.S.A., and may also be referred to as the Junior State. The Junior State was founded by high school students in 1934 as the Junior Statesmen of America.

Article II

Section 1

Junior State membership shall be granted to any high school student who has paid the annual national membership tax and belongs to a chartered tax-paid Junior State chapter. A high school student is defined as an individual in grades nine (9) through twelve (12).

Section 2

A Junior State chapter may be formed by a minimum of eight (8) nationally tax-paid members, chartered by their respective Junior State Governor. In the event that a chapter is formed outside the boundaries of an established State or territory, the right to charter said chapter shall belong to the Council of Governors. Each chapter's respective Governor or the Council of Governors must approve its constitution. Each chapter must be a school-approved club.

Section 3

All nationally tax-paid members of the Junior State of America are citizens thereof and of the State or territory wherein they reside. Neither the national, state, or territorial governments shall make or enforce any law that shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the Junior State nor deny any of its citizens equal protection under the laws of the Junior State.

Article III

Section 1

The Junior State shall be divided into various States and territories, the exact number, names, and boundaries of which shall be determined by the Council of Governors.

Section 2

No new State may be formed within the boundaries of any existing State, nor any State formed by the junction of two or more States, or parts of States, without the consent of the legislatures of the States concerned, as well as of the Council of Governors.

Section 3

When a geographic area contains an aggregation of chapters sufficient enough to merit the establishment of a Junior State of America National Territory, the Council of Governors, by a two-thirds vote, shall approve a constitution, establish a territorial government for that area and determine its boundaries. A National Territory must consist of at least fifteen (15) tax-paid chapters and 200 tax-paid members.

Section 4

When a National Territory has demonstrated an ability to establish and sustain a strong, stable, and enduring government, an ability to conduct quality student-run overnight conventions and other educational programs and has maintained at least twenty-five (25) stable tax-paid chapters and 400 tax-paid members for at least two years, the Council of Governors, by a two-thirds vote, may approve its constitution and boundaries to establish a new State.

Section 5

The governments of each respective State shall possess the sole and exclusive power to divide themselves into regions, districts, etc., as they see fit.

Section 6

In all cases the governments of every State and territory must be republican in form and no Junior State member shall be a citizen of more than one State or territory.

Article IV

Section 1

The supreme legislative and executive body of the Junior State of America shall be the Council of Governors, which shall consist of the Governor of each State. The Governor of each National Territory shall serve as a non-voting member on the Council of Governors. The purpose of the Council of Governors shall be to coordinate the affairs of the Junior State of America on a national level in various areas, including expansion, publications, public relations, overnight convention themes, certain conference themes, finances, and any other area deemed necessary by the Council of Governors.

Section 2

Each member of the Council of Governors is entitled to one vote. In the event that a governor cannot be present for a Council of Governors meeting, the next highest-ranking constitutional official within his/her State or National Territory shall attend said meeting and enjoy all the rights and privileges therein.

Section 3

Each year's Council of Governors shall assemble, in person, at least three times during its term. A quorum of the Council shall consist of three-fourths of its voting members.

Section 4

The Council of Governors shall elect, from among and within itself, a Chair, Secretary, a Junior Statesmen Foundation Trustee, and other officers, as it deems necessary. Each respective Council shall determine the specific duties of each of these offices.

Section 5

All minutes, proceedings, and actions of the Council of Governors shall be considered matters of public record and

kept in proper form by each elected Secretary of the Council of Governors. Each respective Council of Governors must publicize all national bylaws adopted and major national decisions made during its term and send them to the head of the legislative body, or bodies, of each state.

Article V

Section 1

The Council of Governors shall have the power to:

- a) Adopt and implement a national budget;
- b) Levy national taxes, provided that such taxes are uniform throughout the Junior State;
- c) Establish all national departments, agencies, offices, etc., that it deems necessary;
- d) Appoint national officers;
- e) Determine the rules of its proceedings, in accordance with the latest version of *Robert's Rules of Order*;
- f) Be the ultimate judge of the elections, returns, and qualifications of its members;
- g) Establish uniform rules governing Junior State membership;
- h) Make all rules and bylaws that shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers and all other powers vested in the Junior State of America by this Constitution.

Section 2

All votes taken by the Council of Governors shall be final unless a majority of State Legislatures votes against it. Within each State, a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the State legislature is required to strike a decision of the Council of Governors.

Article VI

Section 1

This Constitution, and the bylaws of the Junior State that shall be made in pursuance thereof, shall be the supreme law of the Junior State of America, anything in the constitutions or bylaws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding.

Section 2

Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by a two-thirds vote of the Council of Governors or by a two-thirds vote of the legislature of any State. Amendments shall be adopted upon ratification by three-fourths of all the State legislatures. A two-thirds vote of the State legislature is required for ratification.

Section 3

This Constitution shall take effect upon its ratification by a majority vote of the States' Spring State 2000 delegations.