



LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

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Events Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Virginia's State Constitution

The 1971 document empowered the state to move forward.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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June 16, 2021 (Richmond, Virginia) – The current version of the Constitution of Virginia—the seventh in the commonwealth's long history—became effective at noon on July 1, 1971. It replaced a regressive constitution that had been in place since 1902 and marked an important step forward for all Virginians.

Virginia's state constitution sets forth the fundamental principles on which the powers and duties of state and local government in the commonwealth are based. As such, it has a profound influence on every aspect of our daily lives. We have a special opportunity during this anniversary year not only to celebrate the advances that the Constitution of 1971 embodies, but also to ask ourselves whether further adjustments might be necessary to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

The Library of Virginia is joining with others across the state this year in engaging Virginians in thoughtful reflection about our constitution and its advances in areas such as civil rights, local government, education, and environmental conservation. We invite the public to join the conversation about how our constitution can help Virginians address the challenges of the 21st century. Join us in celebrating this golden anniversary.

Visit www.lva.virginia.gov/71constitution for links to resources to learn more about the Constitution of 1971 and the ongoing role that it plays in the lives of all Virginians, as well as a listing of programs and events across the state commemorating the constitution's 50th anniversary. Below are a few upcoming events.

The Library of Virginia is located at 800 East Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23219. Free parking for visitors is available under our building. Visit www.lva.virginia.gov.

50th Anniversary Celebration Events:

3-DAY EXHIBITION

Four Virginia Constitutions on Display

Tuesday–Thursday, June 29–July 1, 2021 | 10:00 AM–4:00 PM | Library of Virginia Pre-function Hall | Free

Did you know that the Library of Virginia is the institutional home of Virginia's constitutions? Don't miss your chance to see original copies of four of these important documents. In honor of the 50th anniversary of the Virginia

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Constitution of 1971 on July 1, Virginia's Constitutions of 1776, 1869 (also known as the 1870 constitution), 1902, and 1971 will be on display for public viewing.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Looking Back, Looking Forward: The 50th Anniversary of the Virginia Constitution

Thursday, July 1, 2021 | 3:30–5:00 PM | Library of Virginia Lecture Hall | Free

Registration required: www.lva.virginia.gov/public/constitution/register.php

Limited seating is available for this special program commemorating the 50th anniversary of Virginia's current constitution. Join us for a stimulating conversation about the advances made possible by this constitution and the work that still remains. Moderated by A. E. Dick Howard (Warner-Booker Distinguished Professor of Law at the University of Virginia), the panel will include Henry L. Chambers Jr. (professor of law, University of Richmond), Catherine Ward (University of Virginia School of Law, Class of 2022), and Brian Cannon (director of campaigns, Institute for Political Innovation). This event will also be live-streamed—watch for details to come.

WORKSHOP FOR EDUCATORS

Anne & Ryland Brown Teacher Institute: The 50th Anniversary of the Virginia Constitution

July 22 & 29 and August 2 & 3, 2021 | 1-Day Event | Online & Multiple Locations | Free

Registration required: edu.lva.virginia.gov/brown/brown-institute

“The 50th Anniversary of the 1971 Virginia Constitution” is the theme of the Library of Virginia's 2021 Anne and Ryland Brown Teacher Institute, sponsored in partnership with Virginia Humanities. Teachers discover new digital resources and explore how to use primary sources to enhance student learning in their classrooms in this annual workshop generously supported by the Anne and Ryland Brown Teacher Enrichment Fund. The one-day event will be held both virtually (August 2) and in person in Abingdon (July 22), Norfolk (July 29), and Richmond (August 3), offering tools, resources, and content to aid educators in teaching about the 1971 Virginia Constitution and its legacies. All events will include live Q&As with Library of Virginia staff members and guest speakers, such as legal scholar A. E. Dick Howard, the Warner-Booker Distinguished Professor of International Law at the University of Virginia. For more information, visit edu.lva.virginia.gov/brown/brown-institute or contact Emma Ito at emma.ito@lva.virginia.gov.

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Find related images here: www.dropbox.com/sh/fvt5fpskgubjcdU/AACP4ZK3WXqvlEvyIfWVT8DZa?dl=0

About the Library of Virginia

The Library of Virginia is one of the oldest agencies of Virginia government, founded in 1823 to preserve and provide access to the state's incomparable printed and manuscript holdings. Its collection, which has grown steadily through the years, is the most comprehensive resource in the world for the study of Virginia history, culture, and government with over 129 million items in the collections. The Library also engages the public through in-person and virtual events, education programs, and online resources that reach nearly 4 million individuals each year throughout the commonwealth and beyond. Visit www.lva.virginia.gov.

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