
 SESSION OF MARCH 1683

Laws made Att an Assembly Held att Philadelphia in the Province of Pennsylvania the 10th day of 1st Month: March 1683

The Governour and free-men of this Province & territories therof in Provincially Council & Assembly mett having taken into their most Serious consideration, the present State & Condition thereof, To the end that the good beginnings which have bin already made, may be Confirmed and built upon, for the establishment and Compleating of Such a government, as may give equal Right & Justice to all men, and Suppress all impiety and injustice, & so become a terror to evil doers, and a prayse to them that do well.

These following Laws are agreed, resolved, & Enacted by the Authority of the Proprietary & Governor, with the advice and Consent of the free-men of the Province & territories thereof in Provincial-Council, & Assembly met, according to the powers of the Kings Letters patents, for the Continuation and Confirmation of the needfull Laws of this Province and Territories therof.

P.H.M.C., Archives, RG-26, Law Book, 1682-1690 (Patrick Robinson's Book), pp 23-62. See also H.S.P., Laws of Pa. 1682-1688.

 CHAPTER 62.

ACT OF SETTLEMENT.

Chapter 62 *Wheras* William Penn Proprietary & Governor of the Province of Pennsylvania & territories therunto belonging, hath out of his Great kindness and goodnes to the Inhabitants therof, bin favourably pleased to give & grant unto them a Charter of Liberties and priviledges dated the 25th day of the 2d Month 1682 By which Charter it is said, That the Government Shall Consist of the Governor & free-men of the said Province, in the form of A Provincial-Council &

General-Assembly . . . And that the Provincial-Council Shall Consist of 72 members to be chosen by the free-men . . . And that the General-Assembly may the first year consist of the whole body of free-holders, & ever after of an Elected Number, Not Exceeding 200 persons without the consent of the Provincial Council & General-Assembly, And Such Assembly to Sitt yearly on the 20th day of the 3d Month As in the 1st, 2d, 3d, 6th, 14th & 16th Articles of the Charter (Reference being thereunto had) doth more att Large appear.

And For-as-much as this Charter was the first of those Probationary Laws that wer agreed to & made by & between the Proprietary & Governor & the Freeholders in England, purchasers in this Province, . . . Which said Laws, in the whole and every part thereof, wer to be Submitted to the Explanation & Confirmation of the first Provincial-Council & General-Assembly that was to be held in this Province . . . As by the title and first Law of the said Agreement doth plainly appear.

And Wheras the Proprietary & Governor hath, according to that Chapter issued out Writts to the respective Sherriffs of the Six Counties of this Province, to Summon the free-men therof to Choose in each County 12 persons of most Note, for their Sobriety, Wisdom & integrity to Serve in Provincial-Council . . . And also to inform the free-men, that they might come for this time in their own persons, to make up a General-Assembly, according to Charter. And that the said respective Sherriffs by their Returns and the Free-men by their Petitions to the proprietary & Governor have plainly declared, That the fewness of the people, their inability in estate, & Unskillfullness in Matters of government will not permitt them to Serve in So Large a Council & Assembly, as by the Charter is expressed . . . And therfor do desire that the Members now chosen to be their Deputies and Representatives may Serve, both for Provincial Council & General-Assembly, That is to say, 3 out of each County for the Provincial-Council, & the remaining 9 for the General-Assembly, according to Act, as fully & amply as if the said Provincial Council & General-Assembly had Consisted of the same number of Members, mentioned in the Charter of Liberties.

Upon Consideration of the Premisses, and that the Proprietary & Governour may testify his great Willingnes to Comply with that which may be most easy & pleasing to the people . . . Hee is willing that it be

Enacted, And it is Enacted by the Proprietary & Governor, by & with the Unanimous advice and Consent of the free-men of this Province & territories therunto belonging, in Provincial-Council & General-Assembly met, That the Numbers desired by the inhabitants in their Several petitions, and exprest to be their desire by the Sherriffs Returns to the Proprietary & Governor, to Serve as the Provincial-Council & General-Assembly, Be allowed & taken to all intents & Purposes to be the Provincial Council & General Assembly of this Province . . . And that the Quorums shall be proportionably Setled, according to the method exprest in the 5th article, That is to say Two Thirds to make a Quorum in extraordinary Cases, & One Third in ordinary Cases, as is provided in the said 5th Article. Which said Provincial-Council & General-Assembly so already chosen, are & shall be held & reputed the Legal-Provincial-Council & General-Assembly of this Province & territories therof, for this present year

And that from & after the Expiration of this present year, The Provincial-Council shall consist of 3 persons out of each County as aforesaid, And the Assembly shall consist of 6 persons out of each County . . . Which said Provincial Council & Generall Assembly may be hereafter enlarged, as the Governor, Provincial-Council & Assembly shall see Cause, So as the Said number do not at any time Exceed the Limitations exprest in the 3d & 16th, Articles of the Charter, Any thing in this Act or any other Act, Charter or Law to the Contrary in any wise notwithstanding.

And becaus the free-men of this Province & territories therof, are deeplie sensible of the good & kind intentions of the Proprietary & Governor in this Charter, and of the Singular benefit that redounds to them thereby, & are disirous that it may in all things best answer his design for the publick good. The Free-men of the said Province & territories therof in Provincial-Council & General-Assembly met, having Unanimously requested Some Variations, Explanations & Additions in & to the Said Charter . . . Hee the Proprietary & Governor hath therfor yeelded That it be Enacted . . . And it is hereby Enacted, That the time for the meeting of the free-men of this Province & territories therof, to Choose their deputies to represent & Serve them in Provincial-Council & General-Assembly, Shall be yearly hereafter

on the 10th day of the 1st Month Which members so chosen for the Provincial Council shall make their appearance & give their attendance in Provincial Council within 20 days after their election, And the said Members elected to serve in General-Assembly, shall yearly meet & assemble on the 10th day of the Said 3d Month to the end and purposes declared in the Charter, at & in Such place as is Limited in the said Charter, Unles the Governor & Provincial-Council Shall at any time see Caus to the Contrary.

And Whereas it is expressed in the said Charter, That the Governor & Provincial-Council Shall prepare & propose to the General-Assembly all Bills, which they Shall think fit to pass into Laws, within the said Province,

Be it Enacted by the Authority aforesaid That the Governor & Provincial Council shall have the power of preparing & proposing to the General-Assembly, all Bills which they shall jointly assent to, & think fit to have past into Laws, in the said Province & territories therof, that are not inconsistent with, but according to the powers granted by the Kings Letters Patents, to the Proprietary & Governor aforesaid, Which Bills shall be published in the most Noted towns or places in the said province & territories therof, 20 days befor the meeting of the General-Assembly aforesaid.

And for the better decision & determination of all maters & Questions in Provincial-Council & General-Assembly . . . It is hereby declared & Enacted That all Questions upon Elections or Representatives & debates in Provincial-Council & General-Assembly in personal maters, shall be decyded by the Ballot And all Questions about preparing & enacting of Laws shall be determined by the Vote

And that so United an Interest may have an United term or Stile, to be expressed by . . .

It is hereby declared & enacted, That the General-Assembly shall be hence forth termed or called The Assembly And the meeting of the Governour Provincial-Council & Assembly & their acts & proceedings Shall be Styled & called, The Meeting, Sessions Acts or proceedings of the General-Assembly of the Province of Pennsilvania, and the territories therunto belonging.

And that the free-men of this Province & territories therof may not on their parts Seem Unmindfull or Ungratefull to their Proprietary & Governor, for the testimony hee hath bin pleased to give of his great-good-will towards them & theirs, nor be wanting of that duty they owe to him and themselves . . . They have prayed Leave hereby to declare their most hearty acceptance of the said Charter, and their humble acknowledgment for the Same . . . Solemnly promising that they will Inviolably observe and keep the Same (Except as in their excepted) And will neither directly nor indirectly Contrive, propose, enact or do any thing or things whatsoever, by vertue of the power therby granted unto them, that shall or may redound to the prejudice or disadvantage of the Proprietary & Governor, his heirs and Successors in their just rights properties and privileges, granted to him and them by the Kings Letters patents and deeds of release and feoffment made unto him by James Duke of York and Albany &c And whom they desire may be hereby recognized and acknowledged and they are hereby recognized & acknowledged the true and Rightful Proprietaries and Governors of this Province of Pennsylvania and territories therunto annexed according to the Kings letters patents and deeds of Release and feoffment from James Duke of York & Albany &c unto the said Proprietary and Governor his heirs and Successors. Anything in this Act or any other act, grant Charter or Law to the Contrary of these things herein and hereby explained, altered, Limited promised, declared and enacted in any wise notwithstanding.

P.H.M.C., Archives, RG-26, Law Book, 1682-1690 (Patrick Robinson's Book), pp. 23-28. H.S.P., Laws of Pa. 1682-1688. Printed in *A Collection of Charters . . . Relating to the Province of Pennsylvania . . .* Printed and Sold by B. Franklin, in Market-Street, M,DCC,XL, pp. 25-28. Act of March 19, 1682/3. Superseded by Second Frame of Government, April 2, 1683.

CHAPTER 63.

LAW CONTINUING THE LAWS OF 1682.

Chap: 63 Be it Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That all those Laws made by the Assembly held att Chester in the 10th month Last,