

# What is a Republican form of government?

Definition of Republic from Webster's 1828 dictionary:

*A commonwealth; a state in which the exercise of the sovereign power is lodged in representatives elected by the people. In modern usage, it differs from a democracy or democratic state, in which the people exercise the powers of sovereignty in person. Yet the democracies of Greece are often called republics.*

Webster's definition recognizes that sovereign authority is vested in the people and in order to have a government that is mutually beneficial to all people certain aspects of that authority must be delegated to representatives devoted to preservation of the unalienable rights of the people. So the first aspect and lynch pin of a Republic is delegated authority. The second aspect is elected representatives devoted to life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness (protection of land ownership) and the preservation of the peoples God given unalienable rights. The third aspect is the limitation placed on the government (Representatives) by the limited delegations in the first aspect in order to administer the benefits of the second aspect. The final and most detailed aspect is defining the structure of the representation mentioned in the definition above and implementation of the delegated sovereign authority of the people. This is accomplished within the Constitution itself. The legislative branch acts on behalf of the legislative sovereign authority of the people. The Executive branch acts on behalf of the administrative and enforcement sovereign authority of the people. The Judicial branch acts on behalf of the judicial and equitable sovereign authority of the people. All three branches of government work together to form the representatives spoke of in the definition above. Each branch is inherently charged to balance the powers exercised by the others to prevent the over reach of any one branch into the lives and reserved sovereign authorities of the people.

In addition, this definition clearly portrays how a Republican form of government is achieved but we must have a basic understanding for that picture to come into focus. The *Declaration of Independence* acknowledges that our Creator has endowed us with certain unalienable rights and has entrusted us with inherent sovereign authority for self government. The *Law of Nations* teaches us that men can come together, pool their authority and use it for the mutual benefit of all to preserve their God given unalienable rights. This was the purpose for the formation of our Republic by our founding fathers. The *Bill of Rights*, the preamble to the *Bill of Rights* and the preamble of the Constitution were all written with the protection of our God given unalienable rights in mind. This concept is perhaps best stated in the letter of transmittal to the President of the Congress written by those who wrote the Constitution and were in attendance at the constitutional convention.

## Letter of Transmittal to the President of Congress

*In Convention. Monday September 17<sup>th</sup> 1787.*

SIR:

*We have now the honor to submit to the consideration of the United States in Congress assembled, that Constitution which has appeared to us the most advisable.*

*The friends of our country have long seen and desired that the power of making war, peace, and treaties, that of levying money, and regulating commerce, and the correspondent executive and judicial authorities, should be fully and effectually vested in the General Government of the Union; but the impropriety of delegating such extensive trust to one body of men is evident: hence results the necessity of a different organization.*

*It is obviously impracticable in the Federal Government of these States to secure all rights of independent sovereignty to each, and yet provide for the interest and safety of all. Individuals entering into society must give up a share of liberty to preserve the rest. The magnitude of the sacrifice must depend as well on situation and circumstance, as on the object to be obtained. It is at all times difficult to draw with precision the line between those rights which must be surrendered, and those which may be preserved; and, on the present occasion, this difficulty was increased by a difference among the several States as to their situation, extent, habits, and particular interests.*

*In all our deliberations on this subject, we kept steadily in our view that which appears to us the greatest interest of every true American, the consolidation of our Union, in which is involved our prosperity, felicity, safety—perhaps our national existence. This important consideration, seriously and deeply impressed on our minds, led each State in the Convention to be less rigid on points of inferior magnitude than might have been otherwise expected; and thus, the Constitution which we now present is the result of a spirit of amity, and of that mutual deference and concession, which the peculiarity of our political situation rendered indispensable.*

*That it will meet the full and entire approbation of every State is not, perhaps, to be expected; but each will, doubtless, consider, that had her interest alone been consulted, the consequences might have been particularly disagreeable or injurious to others; that it is liable to as few exceptions as could reasonably have been expected, we hope and believe; that it may promote the lasting welfare of that Country so dear to us all, and secure her freedom and happiness, is our most ardent wish.*

*With great respect,  
we have the honor to be, SIR,  
your excellency's most obedient and humble servants:  
GEORGE WASHINGTON, President.  
By the unanimous order of the convention.*

*His Excellency  
the President of Congress.*

So what is a Republican form of government as intended by our founding fathers?

IT is a government in which only certain sovereign authorities of the people are mutually delegated to elected representatives, each with a specific charge to act on behalf of the people and to preserve the peoples God given rights and ensure the opportunities of the blessings of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness to all no matter their station in life. Armed with this knowledge we are now better equipped to understand the goals and objectives of our Republican form of government as our founding fathers understood it and intended it.