

Abraham Lincoln papers

Congress, Joint Resolution¹, February 1, 1865

¹ This is a copy of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which abolished slavery in the United States, signed by members of the House and Senate. The amendment had passed the Senate in April of 1864, and the House by the necessary two thirds vote, on January 31, 1865. Though he was not required to do so, Lincoln also signed the joint resolution. The amendment then required ratification by three fourths of the states, with Illinois, to Lincoln's gratification, the first to do so.

Thirty-Eighth Congress of the United States.

A Resolution; Submitting to the Legislatures of the several States a proposition to amend the Constitution of the United States.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, (two-thirds of both Houses concurring,) That the following article be proposed to the Legislatures of the several States as an Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which, when ratified by three-fourths of said Legislatures, shall be valid, to all intents and purposes, as a part of the said Constitution, namely;

ARTICLE XIII.

Section 1. Neither Slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime; whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2, Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Schuyler Colfax Speaker of the House of Representatives

H. Hamlin Vice President of the United States

and President of the Senate

Approved, February 1. 1865.

[Signed by Lincoln:]

Abraham Lincoln

Attest: J. W. Forney

Secretary of the Senate

Edwd McPherson

Clerk of the House of Representatives

In the Senate, April 8, 1864.

[Followed by 58 Signatures]

In the House of Representatives, January 31, 1865

[Followed by 120 Signatures]