

Chronology of the Colorado Constitution: Eighteen Years to Statehood

The following chronology describes the events that led up to the acceptance of Colorado's State Constitution in 1876.

November, 1858

Denver citizens formed the independent government of Arapahoe County within Kansas Territory and elected a delegate.

First constitutional convention met in Blake and Williams Hall on Blake Street in Denver.

September, 1859

First constitution rejected, but a provisional territorial government called the Territory of Jefferson was formed.

February, 1861

Congress created the Territory of Colorado, headed by William Gilpin.

August-September, 1861

First Legislative Assembly elected and convened.

January 5, 1863

Territorial delegate Hiram P. Bennet introduced a bill to provide statehood for Colorado but it did not pass the House.

1864

Another constitutional convention elected and a constitution drafted but later defeated by public vote.

1865

A new constitution framed and approved in a general election but vetoed by President Johnson.

1869-1873

Each session of Congress received Colorado Statehood Bills but did not pass them.

December, 1873

President Grant recommended an Enabling Act for the admission of Colorado as a state.

January, 1874

Jerome Chaffee, Colorado Territory's delegate to Congress, introduced House Bill 435 for provision of a state government.

June 8, 1874 -March 3, 1875

Bill 435 passed the House, was amended and passed by the Senate and signed by the President.

October 25, 1875

Citizens of Colorado elected a constitutional convention.

December 20, 1875

Delegates for the constitutional convention assembled.

March 14, 1876

Final draft of constitution completed and signed.