

 **Moorish National Republic Federal Government:**

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# **28 U.S. Code § 1738 - State and Territorial statutes and judicial proceedings; full faith and credit**

**The Acts of the legislature of any State, Territory, or Possession of the United States, or copies thereof, shall be authenticated by affixing the seal of such State, Territory or Possession thereto.**

**The records and judicial proceedings of any court of any such State, Territory or Possession, or copies thereof, shall be proved or admitted in other courts within the United States and its Territories and Possessions by the attestation of the clerk and seal of the court annexed**, if a seal exists, together with a certificate of a judge of the court that the said attestation is in proper form.

**Such Acts, records and judicial proceedings or copies thereof, so authenticated, shall have the same full faith and credit in every court within the United States and its Territories and Possessions as they have by law or usage in the courts of such State, Territory or Possession from which they are taken.**

**Article IV, Section 1**

**States, Citizenship, New States**

**Full Faith and Credit** **shall be given in each State to the public Acts, Records, and judicial Proceedings of every other State**. And the Congress may by general Laws prescribe the Manner in which such Acts, Records and Proceedings shall be proved, and the Effect thereof.

## Full Faith and Credit Clause

**The Full Faith and Credit Clause—Article IV,Section 1, of the U.S.Constitution**—provides that the various states must recognize legislative acts, public records,and judicial decisions of the other states within the United States. It states that"Full Faith and Credit shall be given in each State to the public Acts, Records, and judicial Proceedings of every other State."The statute that implements the clause, **28 U.S.C.A. § 1738**, **- State and Territorial statutes and judicial proceedings; full faith and credit** **The Acts of the legislature of any State, Territory, or Possession of the United States, or copies thereof, shall be authenticated by affixing the seal of such State, Territory or Possession thereto.**

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**28 U.S. Code § 1738** further specifies that "a state's preclusion rules should control matters originally litigated in that state."The Full Faith and Credit Clause ensures that judicial decisions rendered by the courts in one state are recognized and honored in every other state. It also prevents parties from moving to another state to escape enforcement of a judgment or to relitigate a controversy already decided elsewhere, a practice known as forum shopping.

In drafting the Full Faith and Credit Clause, the Framers of the Constitution were motivated by a desire to unify their new country while preserving the autonomy of the states. To that end, **they sought to guarantee that judgments rendered by the courts of one state would not be ignored by the courts of other states.** The Supreme Court reiterated the Framers ‘intent when it held that the Full Faith and Credit Clause precluded any further litigation of a question previously decided by an Illinois court in ***Milwaukee County v. M. E. White Co.*, 296U.S.268, 56 S. Ct.229, 80 L. Ed.220 (1935).The Court held that by including the clause in the Constitution, the Framers intended to make the states “integral parts of a single nation throughout which a remedy upon a just obligation might be demanded as of right, irrespective of the state of its origin."**

The Full Faith and Credit Clause is invoked primarily to enforce judgments. when a valid judgment is rendered by a court that has jurisdiction over the parties, and the parties receive proper notice of the action and a reasonable opportunity to be heard, the Full Faith and Credit Clause requires that the judgment receive the same effect in other states as in the state where it is entered. A party who obtains a judgment in one state may petition the court in another state to enforce the judgment. When this is done, the parties do not relitigate the issues, and the court in the second state is obliged to fully recognize and honor the judgment of the first court in determining the enforceability of the judgment and the procedure for its execution.

The Full Faith and Credit Clause has also been invoked to recognize the validity of a marriage. Traditionally, every state honored a marriage legally contracted in any other state. However, in 1993,the Hawaii Supreme Court held that Hawaii's statute restricting legal marriage to parties of the opposite sex establishes a sex-based classification, which is subject to [Strict Scrutiny](https://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Strict%2BScrutiny) if challenged on [Equal Protection](https://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/equal%2Bprotection) grounds **(*Baehr v. Lewin*, 852P.2d44, 74 Haw.530)**. Although the court did not recognize a constitutional right to same-sex marriage, it raised the possibility that a successful equal protection challenge to the state's marriage laws could eventually lead to state-sanctioned same-sex marriages. In response to the *Baehr* case, Congress in 1996 passed the Defense of Marriage Act (110Stat. § 2419),which defines marriage as a union of a man and a woman for federal purposes and expressly grants states the right to refuse to recognize a same-sex marriage performed in another state.

During the 1980 sand 1990s, the Full Faith and Credit Clause was applied to new matters. [Child Custody](https://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Child%2BCustody) determination shad historically fallen under the jurisdiction of state courts, and before the 1970s, other states did not accord them full faith and credit enforcement. As a result, a divorced parent who was unhappy with one state's custody decision could sometimes obtain a more favorable ruling from another state. This was an incentive for a dissatisfied parent to kidnap a child and move to another state in order to petition for custody. In response to this situation, the Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction Act (UCCJA) was adopted by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws in 1968. By 1984, every state had adopted a version of the UCCJA. In 1980, Congress passed the Parental Kidnapping Prevention **Act (28U.S.C.A. § 1738A**), which aids enforcement and promotes finality in child custody decisions by providing that valid custody decrees are entitled to full faith and credit enforcement in other states. The [Violence against Women Act of 1994](https://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Violence%2Bagainst%2BWomen%2BAct%2Bof%2B1994) (Pub. L. No.103-322[codified in scattered sections of **8 U.S.C.A., 18 U.S.C.A., 42 U.S.C.A**.]) extends full faith and credit to the enforcement of protective orders, which previously were not enforced except in the state where they were rendered. This gave a new measure of protection to victims who moved to a different state after obtaining a protective order in one state.

**EQUAL FOOTING DOCTRINE**

**DOCTRINE OF THE EQUALITY OF STATES**

**“Equality of constitutional right and power is the condition of all the States of the Union, old and new.”**  This doctrine, now a truism of constitutional law, did not find favor in the Constitutional Convention. That body struck out from this section, as reported by the Committee on Detail, two sections to the effect that “**new States shall be admitted on the same terms with the original States**. But the Legislature may make conditions with the new States concerning the public debt which shall be subsisting.” Opposing this action, Madison insisted that “the Western States neither would nor ought to submit to a union which degraded them from an equal rank with the other States.” Nonetheless, after further expressions of opinion pro and con, the Convention voted nine states to two to delete the requirement of equality.

Prior to this time, however, Georgia and Virginia had ceded to the United States large territories held by them, upon condition that new states should be formed there from and admitted to the Union on an equal footing with the original states. **Since the admission of Tennessee in 1796, Congress has included in each state’s act of admission a clause providing that the state enters the Union “on an equal footing with the original States in all respects whatever**.” **With the admission of Louisiana in 1812, the principle of equality was extended to states created out of territory purchased from a foreign power. By the Joint Resolution of December 29, 1845, Texas, then an independent Nation, “was admitted into the Union on an equal footing with the original States in all respects whatever.”**

However, if the doctrine rested merely on construction of the declarations in the admission acts, then the conditions and limitations imposed by Congress and agreed to by the states in order to be admitted would nonetheless govern, since they must be construed along with the declarations. Again and again, however, in adjudicating the rights and duties of states admitted after 1789, the Supreme Court has referred to the condition of equality as if it were an inherent attribute of the Federal Union. That the doctrine is of constitutional stature was made evident at least by the time of the decision in Pollard’s Lessee, if not before. Pollard’s Lessee involved conflicting claims by the United States and Alabama of ownership of certain partially inundated lands on the shore of the Gulf of Mexico in Alabama. The enabling act for Alabama had contained both a declaration of equal footing and a reservation to the United States of these lands. Rather than an issue of mere land ownership, the Court saw the question as one concerning sovereignty and jurisdiction of the states. Because the original states retained sovereignty and jurisdiction over the navigable waters and the soil beneath them within their boundaries, retention by the United States of either title to or jurisdiction over common lands in the new states would bring those states into the Union on less than an equal footing with the original states. This, the Court would not permit. “Alabama is, therefore, entitled to the sovereignty and jurisdiction over all the territory within her limits, subject to the common law, to the same extent that Georgia possessed it, before she ceded it to the United States. To maintain any other doctrine, is to deny that Alabama has been admitted into the union on an equal footing with the original states, the constitution, laws, and compact, to the contrary notwithstanding. . . . [T]o Alabama belong the navigable waters and soils under them, in controversy in this case, subject to the rights surrendered by the Constitution to the United States; and no compact that might be made between her and the United States could diminish or enlarge these rights.”

Finally, in 1911, the Court invalidated a restriction on the change of location of the state capital, which Congress had imposed as a condition for the admission of Oklahoma, on the ground that Congress may not embrace in an enabling act conditions relating wholly to matters under state control. In an opinion, from which Justices Holmes and McKenna dissented, Justice Lurton argued: “The power is to admit ‘new States into this Union,’ **‘This Union’ was and is a union of States, equal in power, dignity and authority, each competent to exert that residuum of sovereignty not delegated to the United States by the Constitution itself.** To maintain otherwise would be to say that the Union, through the power of Congress to admit new States, might come to be a union of States unequal in power, as including States whose powers were restricted only by the Constitution, with others whose powers had been further restricted by an act of Congress accepted as a condition of admission.”

The equal footing doctrine is generally a limitation upon the terms by which Congress admits a state. That is, **states must be admitted on an equal footing in the sense that Congress may not exact conditions solely as a tribute for admission**, but it may, in the enabling or admitting acts or subsequently impose requirements that would be or are valid and effectual if the subject of congressional legislation after admission. Thus, Congress may embrace in an admitting act a regulation of commerce among the states or with Indian tribes or rules for the care and disposition of the public lands or reservations within a state. “ [I]n every such case such legislation would derive its force not from any agreement or compact with the proposed new State, nor by reason of its acceptance of such enactment as a term of admission, but solely because the power of Congress extended to the subject, and, therefore, would not operate to restrict the State’s legislative power in respect of any matter which was not plainly within the regulating power of Congress.”

Until recently the requirement of equality has applied primarily to political standing and sovereignty rather than to economic or property rights. **Broadly speaking, every new state is entitled to exercise all the powers of government which belong to the original states of the Union. It acquires general jurisdiction, civil and criminal, for the preservation of public order, and the protection of persons and property throughout its limits even as to federal lands, except where the Federal Government has reserved or the state has ceded some degree of jurisdiction to the United States, and, of course, no state may enact a law that would conflict with the constitutional powers of the United States**. Consequently, it has jurisdiction to tax private activities carried on within the public domain (although not to tax the Federal lands), if the tax does not constitute an unconstitutional burden on the Federal Government. Statutes applicable to territories, e.g., the Northwest Territory Ordinance of 1787, cease to have any operative force when the territory, or any part thereof, is admitted to the Union, except as adopted by state law. When the enabling act contains no exclusion of jurisdiction as to crimes committed on Indian reservations by persons other than Indians, state courts are vested with jurisdiction.But the constitutional authority of Congress to regulate commerce with Indian tribes is not inconsistent with the equality of new states, and conditions inserted in the New Mexico Enabling Act forbidding the introduction of liquor into Indian territory were therefore valid.[285](https://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution-conan/article-4/section-3/clause-1/doctrine-of-the-equality-of-states#fn285art4) Similarly, Indian treaty rights to hunt, fish, and gather on lands ceded to the Federal Government were not extinguished by statehood. These “usufructuary” rights were subject to reasonable state regulation, and hence were not irreconcilable with state sovereignty over natural resources.

Admission of a state on an equal footing with the original states involves the adoption as citizens of the United States of those whom Congress makes members of the political community and who are recognized as such in the formation of the new state.