

The Great Compromise

During the Constitutional Convention of 1787, delegates from across the newly formed United States gathered to design a more effective national government. A central conflict emerged over how states should be represented in the legislative branch—larger states favored population-based representation, while smaller states demanded equal representation. This disagreement revealed deep regional interests and competing visions for the future of the republic. The eventual solution, known as the Great Compromise, was not the result of a single idea but of many voices engaging in deliberate negotiation. It demonstrated that effective governance requires the input of diverse perspectives and a willingness to find common ground.

Essential Question

- Was the Great Compromise a fair solution?
- What is the role of compromise in political processes?

Vocabulary

Bicameral – A legislative body with two chambers or houses.

Senate – One of the two houses of the U.S. Congress; each state gets equal representation.

House of Representatives – The other house of Congress; representation is based on population.

Virginia Plan – A proposal that favored larger states by allocating representation based on population.

New Jersey Plan – A proposal that favored small states by giving equal representation to each state.