

## State Declarations April-July 1776

**North Carolina** April 12, 1776

***Note:** North Carolina was the first colony to take official action for independence. The delegates in its Congress all agreed to the decision. They authorized the colony's three representatives to vote for independence in the Continental Congress.*

Resolved, That the delegates for this Colony in the Continental Congress be empowered to concur with the delegates of the other Colonies in declaring Independency, and forming foreign alliances, reserving to this Colony the sole and exclusive right of forming a Constitution and laws for this Colony, and of appointing delegates from time to time (under the direction of a general representation thereof), to meet the delegates of the other Colonies for such purposes as shall be hereafter pointed out.

How would you put this in your own words in 1-2 sentences? What does this show about the relationship between the people and their representatives in government?

**Rhode Island** May 4, 1776

***Note:** This act officially ended Rhode Island Colony's loyalty to King George III of England. Rhode Island was the first state to separate from the king.*

Where as George the Third King of Britain forgetting his dignity, regardless of the Compact most solemnly entered into ratified & confirmed to the Inhabitants of this Colony by his illustrious Ancestors- and till of late fully recognized by him and entirely departing from the duties and Character of a good king instead of Protecting is endeavoring to destroy the good people of this Colony, and of all the

united Colonies by sending Fleets and Armies to America to confiscate our Property and to spread Fire, Sword and Desolation throughout our Country in order to compel us to submit to the debasing and detestable Tyranny whereby we are obliged by necessity and it becomes our highest Duty to use every means with which God and Nature have furnished us, in support of our invaluable rights, & privileges to oppose that Power which is exerted only for our destruction. Be it therefore Enacted by this General Assembly and by the Authority thereof it is Enacted that an Act entitled “An Act for the more effectual securing to His Majesty the Allegiance of his Subjects in this His Colony and Dominion of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations” be and the same is hereby repealed.

How would you put this in your own words in 2-3 sentences? What does this show about Rhode Island’s expectations of their relationship with King George?

## **Virginia** June 29, 1776

***Note:** Virginia and New Jersey both authorized delegates in Congress to vote for independence. Then a few weeks later, both adopted state constitutions that declared independence. Virginia declared on June 29, 1776. New Jersey declared on July 2, 1776, the same day that the Continental Congress voted for independence.*

[Long list of grievances against King George III] By which several Acts of Misrule, the Government of this Country, as formerly exercised under the Crown of Great Britain, is totally dissolved.

How would you put this into your own words in one sentence? Why use the language “totally dissolve” in this case?

## **Maryland** July 6, 1776

***Note:** In mid-June 1776, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Delaware, and Pennsylvania told their delegates they could vote for independence. On June 28, Maryland gave its delegates the same instructions. A week later, on July 6, 1776, Maryland made its own official declaration of independence.*

[Long list of grievances against King George III] We, the Delegates of *Maryland* in Convention assembled, do declare, that the King of *Great Britain* has violated his compact with this people, and that they owe no allegiance to him...No ambitious views, no desire of independence, induced the people of *Maryland* to form an union with the other Colonies... To maintain inviolate our liberties, and to transmit them unimpaired to posterity, was our duty and first wish....

How would you put this in your own words in 1-2 sentences? Why did the Maryland leaders say they declared independence not for their own ambition, but to protect future generations?

### **Prepare for Class Discussion**

1. How did some American colonists show Congress they supported breaking away from King George in Great Britain?
2. What is the relationship between the people and their government **representatives**?
3. How do state declarations show the idea of **consent of the governed**?