

Congress and Civility by Design

Handout 1: Journal of the United States House of Representatives, April 6, 1789 (Transcript)

This transcript shows some of the first actions of the House.

Monday, April 6

On motion,

Ordered, That (permission) be given to bring in a bill to regulate the taking the oath or affirmation prescribed by the sixth article of the Constitution...

On motion,

Resolved, That the form of the oath to be taken by the members of this House, as required by the third clause of the sixth article of the Constitution of Government of the United States, be (as follows) "I, (Name), a Representative of the United States in the Congress thereof, do solemnly swear (or affirm, as the case may be) in the presence of Almighty God, that I will support the Constitution of the United States. So help me God."

A message from the Senate by Mr. Ellsworth:

Mr. Speaker: I am charged by the Senate to inform this House, that a quorum of the Senate is now formed; that a President (of the Senate) is elected for the sole purpose of opening the certificates and counting the votes of the electors of the several States, in the choice of a President and Vice President of the United States; and that the Senate is now ready in the Senate chamber, to proceed, in the presence of this House, to discharge that duty. I have it also in further charge, to inform this House, that the Senate has appointed one of its members to sit at the Clerk's table to make a list of the votes as they shall be declared, submitting it to the wisdom of this House to appoint one or more of its members for the like purpose. And then he withdrew.

On motion,

Resolved, That Mr. Speaker, attended by the House, do now withdraw to the Senate chamber, for the purpose expressed in the message from the Senate; and that Mr. Parker and Mr. Heister be appointed on the part of this House to sit at the Clerk's table with the member of the Senate, and make a list of the votes as (they) shall be declared.

Mr. Speaker accordingly left the chair, and, attended by the House, withdrew to the Senate chamber, and after some time returned to the House....

On motion,

Ordered, That a message be sent to the Senate, to inform them that it is the desire of this House that the notifications of the election of the President and Vice President of the United States, should be made by such persons and in such manner as the Senate shall be pleased to direct; and that Mr. Madison do communicate the said message.

And then the House adjourned until to-morrow twelve o'clock.