

GOP: On the Right Side of History



13th Amendment – Abolishing Slavery

The 13th amendment abolished slavery in the United States and provides that "neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction".

Although the Senate passed the amendment in April 1864, the House did not pass the bill until January 1865. With a slim but required 2/3rds vote of 119-56 the 13th amendment had 100% Republican support but only 23% Democrat support in congress.

On that day Representative James Ashley of Ohio noted that "the genius of history with iron pen is waiting to record our verdict...which shall declare America is free." The vote sealed victory for abolitionists' long battle against the "peculiar institution."

Despite rules dictating decorum in the House Chamber, the roll call vote instigated jubilant celebration. "The final announcement of the vote was the sequel for a whirlwind of applause wholly unprecedented in Congressional annals," reported the *Chicago Tribune*. "The galleries led off, giving cheer after cheer. The members on the floor then joined in the shouting, throwing up their hats and clapping their hands."

The 13th amendment was ratified on December 6, 1865 by the State of Georgia. Southern States were required to adopt the 13th amendment before they could return with full rights to Congress.