

# Ratifying the Constitution

35pts

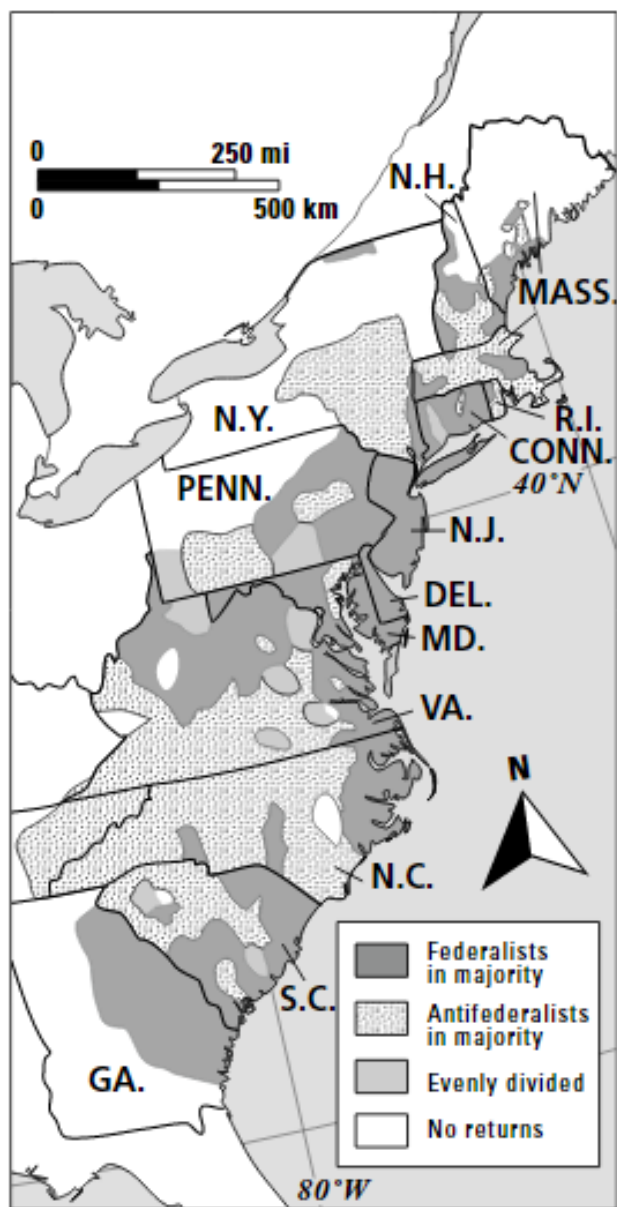
Delegates to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia signed their approval of the document on September 17, 1787. Yet, the proposed Constitution was controversial.

The Constitution said that 9 (of the 13) states were needed to ratify the Constitution. Reaching that number would not be easy. One state, Rhode Island, had protested the idea of a national government from the beginning. It had not even sent delegates to the convention. Then, some states feared that the Constitution would take away too much of their power. Others feared that it would allow larger states to dominate. Some Southern states distrusted Northern states.

People formed two groups. Antifederalists

opposed the Constitution. This included a great number of people who were small farmers and lived in rural areas. Federalists supported it. This included the majority of people who owned large properties and businesses. People who lived in larger towns also generally supported it. The map below details how the states were split on ratification.

Congress moved ahead. On September 28, it sent the Constitution to the 13 states for approval. At the same time Congress called for special ratifying conventions in each state. This move bypassed some state legislatures that opposed the document. Eventually all state conventions approved the Constitution. Rhode Island was last, taking nearly three years.



**Percentage of Votes For and Against Ratification of the Constitution**

State	% For	% Against
Delaware	100	0
Georgia	100	0
New Jersey	100	0
Maryland	85	15
Connecticut	76	24
North Carolina	72	28
Pennsylvania	67	33
South Carolina	67	33
New Hampshire	55	45
Massachusetts	53	47
New York	53	47
Virginia	53	47
Rhode Island	52	48

## **Interpreting Maps and Text**

1. Which three states supported only the Federalist pro-ratification position?
2. Georgia was 100 percent in favor of ratifying the Constitution. Yet unlike New Jersey and Delaware, the state is not completely covered by "Federalists in majority" patterning. Explain how this could be.
3. Which position won more support in coastal areas (where the biggest towns are located)?
4. Where was Antifederalist support concentrated mainly?
5. Look at the pattern for New York. Antifederalists controlled most of the state's territory. Why do you support that support for ratification won out?
6. Why is it not surprising that Rhode Island's vote total was the closest?
7. Consider the map again. What would have happened if New York alone had failed to vote for ratification?