Mr Speaker –

The People, by their Electors shall elect the President, this is undoubtedly the meaning and the true construction given the Constitution,– then to carry this fully into effect is doubtless pursuing the wishes of the framers of that Instrument: – and I contend that the Amendment under consideration is calculated to accomplish this object and without this amendment, a person not having the confidence of the Nation may be elected – can it be said with this contingent, that the Constitution will inspire so full confidence as if difficulty was removed. – Confidence in a Republican government is important, confidence cannot be placed in such a government if the majority cannot govern. –

But, Sir, we are told that certain great States are determined to usurp all authority and bear down the constitution; that the very place where we are now on is to become Virginia property, and therefore we must not tutch that sacred instrument the constitution. – and, Sir if this be so: Suppose at the time of the late Presidential [sic] election, no President had been elected untill after the fourth of March – who would answer for the consequences? would not the great States then have refused (in agreeing to a new Constitution which must then have been formed) to give the small States an equal vote with the larger in the Senate, – and this precious article in the present Constitution cannot ever be altered – privelages injoyed under the present constitution are much greater than could be expected were a new Constitution now to be formed, – to prevent the Constitution from running out by the present amendment is of more importance to the Small States, than can possibly ever be gained to them, by electing a President under the Constitution as it now is. – [2] I believe, Sir we aught not to calculate to turn, or have a wish for the election of a President, in any other way than by the Electors, for without this popular privelage the constitution would not have been adopted – again four small States which send but Eight members to the House of representatives have a right to Sixteen votes for President while a great State, having a right to send say from 18 to 25 Members can add but two to her number in
the choice of a President is [inserted: not] this advantage great enough for small States in that particular, under such an institution. –

On the subject of innovation, great clamour is made. I am not in favour of innovation or amendments except for important and weighty considerations; – but were not amendments expected? most certainly they were expected and I will venture & say that without this provision, the constitution would never have been adopted. – And will any Gent. n Say that amendments have as yet injured the constitution? it is a well known fact that the amendments already incorporated into the constitution have greatly increased its friends. – Are Gent n afraid this amendment will also increase its friends, and stability and in that way prevent and destroy a favorite object with Some, namly [sic], a division of the Union between the northern and southern States? – I will not accuse any gent n. In this house with such base motives but Sir I believe there are men base enough in New England to wish for such a measure.

Under an impression that the proposed amendment if adopted will give Stability and duration to the Constitution I shall give it my hearty support –

[docket]
Legislature 1804