

# Southern California State Constitution

As Of July 31, 2019

## Preamble

We, the students of the Southern California Junior State of America, determined to achieve a better understanding of the governmental process, increase our awareness of contemporary issues, promote civil activism in politics, encourage good leadership qualities and responsibility in high school students, and allow every individual the right to achieve the highest degree of involvement one wishes to obtain, do hereby establish this Constitution of the Southern California Junior State of America.

## Article I: Name

### SECTION 1.

The name of this organization shall be the Southern California Junior State of America. The organization may be referred to as the Junior State.

## Article II: Membership

### SECTION 1.

All members of the Junior State shall enjoy equal protection under the Constitution and shall not be denied any rights or privileges entitled to them without proper action according to the law as established within this Constitution.

### SECTION 2.

Membership in the Junior State shall be granted to any high school or middle school student who has paid the annual State Membership Tax and belongs to or intends to start a Junior State chapter.

## Article III: Forming A Chapter

### SECTION 1.

The Junior State chapter may be formed by a minimum of eight (8) students at a high school who have paid the annual State Membership Tax.

#### Subsection 1.

A chapter in its first year will be exempt from the requirement of having eight tax paid chapter members.

These new chapters will have to adhere to every other requirement.

**Subsection 2.**

These Provisional Chapters will receive extra monitoring from the Expansion Department to assist in establishing strong sustainable chapters.

The Director(s) of Expansion will decide what type of additional monitoring is needed for all Provisional Chapters.

**SECTION 2.**

These chapter governments shall not deny the citizens thereof a republican form of government and will elect or appoint officials based on their Chapter Constitution.

**SECTION 3.**

The chapter will be chartered by the SoCal JSA Governor upon receipt and approval of the chapter's "Chapter Leadership Form" and "Tax Form."

**SECTION 4.**

New chapters and chapters who have updated and/or amended their Chapter Constitution must send a copy to their MyJSA account.

**SECTION 5.**

Constructing and establishing a structured procedure for a group of homeschooled students to be able to form a chapter, hold regular meetings, and be eligible to attend conventions and other Junior State of America events. The chapter must abide by all bylaws and rules regarding chapters and chapter presidents, monthly meetings, acquiring a community member to act as a year round advisor.

## Article IV: Regions

**SECTION 1.**

The Junior State shall be divided into various regions, the exact boundaries of each to be determined by the Junior Statesmen Foundation (JSF).

The Angeles Region (AR) shall consist of the countries of Los Angeles and Kern.

The Channel Islands Region (CIR) shall consist of the countries of San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura.

The Southern Empire Region (SER) shall consist of the countries of Imperial, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego.

**SECTION 2.**

No person or chapter may belong to more than one (1) region and the members of the region are to be the only voters in their regional elections.

**SECTION 3.**

The regional government shall not deny the citizens, thereof, a republican form of government.

## Article V: Southern California State Assembly

### SECTION 1.

The Junior State Assembly shall have the authority to adopt the platform of the Junior State of America. This platform shall be the official stance of the Junior State on youth related issues and shall be adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Assembly.

### SECTION 2.

Each chapter is entitled to up to two (2) Assembly Members. No chapter shall be denied representation in the Assembly.

#### Subsection 1.

Each chapter only has one (1) vote in the assembly, regardless of the number of Assembly Members in the chapter.

### SECTION 3.

All members of the Speaker's Department shall be members of the Junior State Assembly. Members of the Speaker's Department are representatives of the State, and therefore do not take up assembly seats from their chapters.

## Article VI: Southern California Bicameral System

The Bicameral system within the Southern California Junior State of America is defined as the process in which a bill is passed amongst both the Senate and the Assembly, prior to the Governor signing it.

### SECTION 1.

Assembly members will have the ability to sponsor bills and amendments, which will first be passed within the Senate, then in the Assembly.

#### Subsection 1.

Assembly members can sponsor legislation with either another Assembly member or a Senator (ie: 2 Assembly members or 1 Assembly Member/1 Senator).

#### Subsection 2.

Traditional voting regulations of a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority shall still apply to this process.

### SECTION 2.

Any bill written may be presented first at either the Senate meeting or the Assembly meeting, depending on the discretion of the Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker of the Assembly. A bill must pass with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority to move on to the next house, regardless of whether or not it is voted on in the Senate or Assembly first.

#### Subsection 3.

If it is impossible for a bill to be presented to both the Senate or Assembly at a convention, then a unanimous vote will eliminate the need for the bill to pass through both houses.

I.e., All six Senators must vote to pass a bill in order for it to be enacted without the Assembly's approval, and all Assembly members present at a meeting must vote to pass the bill without the Senate's approval.

### **SECTION 3.**

All bills and amendments shall receive two minutes to be presented by their writers in both the Senate and the Assembly. After those two minutes, a question period of up to three minutes is allowed. Following the question period, by a raise of hands, legislators shall vote. This process is to take place separately for Senators and Assembly Members.

#### **Subsection 4.**

A plank is to be given different treatment from other legislation due to the nature of its goal. Planks are meant to assess the general opinion of the whole Southern California Junior State and therefore requires time for the general public to converse on its topic.

The writer of a plank shall give a two minute presentation, subsequently followed by a three minute question period. Afterwards, time of two minutes will be allotted to a speaker against the plank. Time permitting, this process of alternating opposing speeches will continue until no one wishes to speak or the Speaker decides that time is running out. After the speeches, a vote must take place by way of a raised hand.

Each plank should be given an overall equal amount of time, time permitting.

A motion by the Assembly members must pass with a simple majority to suspend these rules and change them for that particular meeting only. The Speaker may reject a motion if necessary.

### **SECTION 4.**

The Governor and Lieutenant Governor shall be prohibited from serving as a member of the Senate Assembly.

## **Article VII: Leadership Of The State**

### **SECTION 1.**

The Governor is the Chief Executive Officer of the Junior State. The Governor and the Lieutenant Governor shall have the authority to establish a Southern California Junior State of America Cabinet and agencies necessary for the well-being of the Junior State. The Governor and Lieutenant Governor have the authority to create new departments and appoint heads of such departments and agencies.

#### **Subsection 1.**

A guide of all cabinet positions shall be made public no later than June 1st of that year.

### **SECTION 2.**

The Lieutenant Governor shall preside over the State Senate, as well as regional affairs. The Lieutenant Governor shall be responsible for chairing the Fair Elections Committee or selecting a chair for the committee.

### **SECTION 3.**

The State Speaker shall preside over the Junior State Assembly. They shall also promote civic activism.

#### **Subsection 1.**

The Junior State shall actively encourage the registration to vote of all persons who are qualified to do so.

### **SECTION 4.**

Each Cabinet department will be responsible for the duties allocated to them by the Governor and Lieutenant Governor.

### **SECTION 5.**

The Lieutenant Governor shall become Governor in the event that the office is vacated. Should any office be vacated for which there is no established replacement, the Governor shall appoint a tax-paid Junior State member to that office within a period of two (2) weeks. If the Governor chooses to veto a bill and prevent it from passing, the Assembly and Senate may both take a re-vote on the bill and potentially override the Governor's veto.

### **SECTION 6.**

Term limits will regulate the amount of terms an elected position may serve

An individual is limited to serving 2 terms, per title, for an elected regional position.

An individual is limited to serving 1 term, per title, for an elected state position.

In the case of a change in power, in which another elected official or cabinet member assumes a new elected position without an election, the previous position will be considered in the term limits.

### **SECTION 7.**

Cabinet Officers shall be required to attend all mandatory events and conventions hosted by Southern California JSA.

#### **Subsection 2.**

Absences shall only be excused under the consent of the governor through a written explanation one month prior to date.

Failure to uphold required dates shall result in a consequence decided by the Big Three

#### **Subsection 3.**

Cabinet Officers shall be required to be a member of a school chapter within Southern California.

Active participation and attendance of chapter meetings shall be expected from cabinet officers.

Active participation shall not be limited to maintaining a chapter position

#### **SECTION 8.**

Cabinet Officers are to be held accountable for making decisions that accurately reflect the ideals of JSA—honesty, accountability, and inclusivity.

Students who commit any illegal action outside of JSA shall jeopardize their leadership position within SoCal JSA

#### **SECTION 9.**

The Governor of Southern California Junior State of America shall have the executive power to dismiss an elected official

The Governor shall have the ability to veto against the dismissal of both a state and regional elected official regardless of popularity vote.

The purpose for such decisions shall be publicized to the tax paid members of Southern California Junior State of America in writing no later than five days after order.

A hearing shall be granted to the accused officer before a decision of removal is sanctioned.

The accused officers shall have the opportunity to defend their actions and refute any false accusation pertinent to his/her removal.

Within two weeks of removal, the senate shall inform tax paid members of Southern California JSA, the name of the replacement.

#### **SECTION 10.**

No person shall hold more than one position as either a State, Regional, or National Official.

## **Article VIII: Southern California State Senate**

#### **SECTION 1.**

The legislative authority of the Southern California Junior State shall be vested in the State Senate.

The Senate's mission shall be to ensure the Junior State functions efficiently and to constantly seek to improve and expand the organization each year.

##### **Subsection 1.**

The Senate's specific obligations shall include, but not be limited to, confirming cabinet members, conducting cabinet oversight, enforcing legislation, interpreting the constitution, amending the constitution, operating the Fair Elections Committee, and planning Congress. The Senate shall hold public meetings, at times and places accessible to members of the Junior State and publish a record of their meetings, and make them available to the members of the Junior State.

#### **SECTION 2.**

Each region shall elect two (2) Senators to comprise the State Senate.

### **SECTION 3.**

The State Senate shall interpret the State Constitution.

### **SECTION 4.**

At least one Senator from each region must be present to start a meeting and vote on a measure to ensure equal representation.

#### **Subsection 2.**

Upon the Lieutenant Governor's permission, if any four senators are present, regardless of their region, a meeting may be started.

#### **Subsection 3.**

In order for a bill to be passed, it must receive a majority vote from the senators present.

The majority covers all the following voting combinations:

In the case that six senators are present, the bill must receive a 46 vote to pass.

In the case that five senators are present, the bill must receive a 35 vote to pass.

In the case that four senators are present, the bill must receive a 34 vote to pass.

In the case that three senators are present, the bill must receive a 23 vote to pass.

### **SECTION 5.**

Every bill passed by the State Senate shall, before becoming a bylaw, will be presented to the SoCal JSA Assembly by a SoCal JSA Senator. To pass, the bill must receive a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the gathered Assembly. If it fails, it goes back to the Senate with suggestions for revisions. If it passes, it is presented to the Governor of the Junior State. If that person approves, that person shall sign it; if not that person shall return it with his or her objections to the State Senate that shall proceed to reconsider it. If a bill is not returned by the Governor within ten (10) days after first presented to him or her, it shall be enacted as law.

### **SECTION 6.**

The Lieutenant Governor shall preside over the State Senate. Meetings may be called by the Lieutenant Governor.

## **Article IX: Election Procedures**

### **SECTION 1.**

The Junior State Fair Elections Committee (FEC) shall be responsible for conducting the election of statewide and regional officers of the Junior State through a popular vote. The Fair Elections Committee shall consist of a combination of Senators and Junior Statesmen as selected by the FEC Head Chair.

**Subsection 1.**

All election procedures shall be dictated by the Head Chair of the Fair Elections Committee and established in the Fair Elections Committee Handbook, aside from the regulations stated in the Southern California Junior State of America Constitution.

**SECTION 2.**

Each tax-paid JSA member is entitled to exactly one (1) vote at Spring State for each office.

**SECTION 3.**

Any tax-paid member of a chapter is eligible for any office.

**SECTION 4.**

No candidate, besides Senator, shall be elected unless that person has the votes of more than fifty percent (50%) of those present and voting.

**Subsection 2.**

In an election where four or more candidates are running the following procedures will be used.

A first round of voting will commence and any candidate receiving over 33.3% of the total votes cast will automatically be elected to the position of Senator.

**SECTION 5.**

Candidacy for Office shall be made official upon public announcement of intention to run.

**Subsection 3.**

Candidates for Office shall submit a Declaration of Candidacy form to the Fair Elections Committee Chair.

**SECTION 6.**

Before any member of the Junior State may assume any office of the Junior State that person must take the following oath: "I do Solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the Junior State of America; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of this government; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties upon which I am about to enter."

## Article X: Environmental Stewardship

Recycling of all paper products, and all other such items, will take place at all regional and state conventions.

**SECTION 1.**

All departments within the SoCal JSA Cabinet will collaborate to upkeep eco-friendly measures throughout JSA events.

All moderator packets will exist in a digital form and remain accessible to moderators.



Moderator packets in its digital form can be accessed through a web address including the required information in a document, or sent to the moderator prior to the debate.

All petitions at the activism table will exist in a digital form and accessible to members of the convention.

The amount of paper paraphernalia available during conventions and one-days will be limited, and the use of digital copies will be emphasized.

Physical paper copies will be provided only upon request.

The Fundraising Department will be encouraged to produce eco-friendly merchandise available to purchase at conventions

Posters will be made and placed at conventions to promote sustainability; additional posters will be placed near water fountains and waste receptacles.

#### **SECTION 2.**

All the aforementioned policies may be exempt if a valid reason is addressed to the leadership in JSA.

## **Article XI: Official Holiday Of The Junior State**

#### **SECTION 1.**

The ninth day of November shall be designated as “Professor Ernest Andrew Rogers’ Day.”

## **Article XII: Ratification And Amendments**

#### **SECTION 1.**

This Constitution shall take effect upon ratification by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Junior State Assembly.

#### **SECTION 2.**

Amendments to this Constitution shall be written using the Bicameral system and take effect upon ratification by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Junior State Senate and a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Junior State Assembly.