

Reports of Elbridge Gerry Acquiescence to Massachusetts Ratification 13–28 February 1788

Following the heated debate in the state Convention on 19 January and the fracas that occurred after the Convention adjourned for that day, Gerry, who had been invited to answer questions concerning the Constitution, refused to return to the Convention. After the Convention adjourned on 7 February, interest in Gerry's attitude heightened and reports circulated that Gerry, like some other Antifederalists, had acquiesced to the ratification of the Constitution.

Jeremy Belknap to Ebenezer Hazard, Boston, 10 February 1788 (excerpt)

... Gerry is crestfallen but acquiesces....

***Hampshire Chronicle*, 13 February 1788**

We have a right to assure the publick, from indisputable authority, that the Honourable ELBRIDGE GERRY openly declares, that notwithstanding he has uniformly opposed the adoption of the Constitution by this State, he now, since its ratification by a respectable Majority, considers it as his and the duty of every honest man in the community, to give it all the support in his power; and that he himself will certainly use his influence for this purpose.

Henry Knox to Edward Carrington, New York, 14 February 1788 (excerpt)

... The minority behaved with moderation and some of them declared their intention of uniting their influence in Support of the constitution—Mr Gerry although not of the convention has pledged himself to this effect....

***Pennsylvania Gazette*, 27 February 1788**

Our last paper announced to our friends the patriotic, temperate and manly conduct of the minority of the Massachusetts Convention. We are happy in being able to inform them, that the eastern papers give us an authoritative assurance that the Honorable Eldridge Gerry, Esq; of that state, who declined to sign the recommendation of the new Constitution in the Fœderal Convention, now declares, since it has received the sanction of the majority of the people, that he will firmly support it.

***Richmond Virginia Gazette and Weekly Advertiser*, 28 February 1788**

With the highest satisfaction we announce to the public, that the Convention of the state of Massachusetts adopted the new Constitution on the 6th instant, by a majority of 19—187 yeas—168 nays.—And that Mr. GERRY has declared, since the adoption of the Constitution, that he will steadily support it.

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