Alabama DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES & HISTORY
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ARCHIVES ANNOUNCES *WE THE PEOPLE: ALABAMA'S DEFINING DOCUMENTS,*
AN EXHIBITION OF ALABAMA'S SIX CONSTITUTIONS, OPENING AT THE HUNTSVILLE MUSEUM OF ART JUNE 30, 2019

Montgomery, AL (5/30/19) – The Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH) will present a special bicentennial exhibition, *We the People: Alabama's Defining Documents,* for six weeks at the Huntsville Museum of Art (HMA) beginning Sunday, **June 30, 2019.** This exhibition is the first time Alabama's six constitutions have been on view together outside of the ADAH's building in Montgomery.

In the summer of 1819, forty-four delegates met in Huntsville to draft Alabama's first constitution, the defining document that provided the framework for the state's government. Two hundred years later, the constitution of 1819 is returning to the city. *We the People: Alabama's Defining Documents* will feature all six of Alabama's constitutions, along with the 1861 ordinance of secession, which declared Alabama's separation from the Union on the eve of the Civil War. This exhibition will explore how these documents, some of the most important in state history, reflect their framers' values, hopes, and fears.

The exhibition is curated and designed by the staff of the ADAH, where the documents permanently reside. In preparation for the celebration of Alabama's bicentennial year, extensive conservation work was conducted on the documents by the Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) in Andover, Massachusetts.

"On the occasion of Alabama's 200th anniversary, it is appropriate that the 1819 constitution return to the place of its adoption," said Steve Murray, director of the ADAH. "The exhibition is a special opportunity to learn and reflect on the consequential history of each of these documents, and we are grateful to the Huntsville Museum of Art for making it possible."

"This exhibition is an historic milestone for our state and we are honored to showcase these important documents at our Museum in the city where it all began," commented Christopher J. Madkour, executive director of the HMA. "We hope everyone in our community is able to visit the Museum to view the documents in person before they return to our state's capital."

The documents will travel from Montgomery to Huntsville on Tuesday, June 25, in a special bicentennial motorcade with state trooper escorts.

The exhibition will be on view at the Huntsville Museum of Art June 30 through August 11. On Sunday, June 30, from 12:00 pm to 5:00pm, the museum will offer a free admission day. A ribbon cutting will be held at 1:00. At 3:00, ADAH director Steve Murray will present a lecture on the constitutional convention of 1819. He will be followed by Katie Boodle, conservator at NEDCC, who will discuss the conservation of Alabama's defining documents. The ribbon cutting and lectures are open to the public.

We the People will also be on view from November 3 through December 31, 2019, at the Museum of Alabama, located inside the ADAH in Montgomery.

The Alabama Department of Archives and History is the state's government-records repository, a special-collections library and research facility, and home to the Museum of Alabama, the state history museum. It is located in downtown Montgomery, directly across the street from the State Capitol. The Archives and Museum are open Monday through Saturday, 8:30 to 4:30. The EBSCO Research Room is open Tuesday through Friday and the second Saturday of the month from 8:30 to 4:30. To learn more, visit www.archives.alabama.gov or call (334) 242-4364.

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