

Key Conflicts in the Constitutional Convention

Strong Central Government

- Authority derives from the people.
- In a new plan of government, the central government should be stronger than the states.

vs.

Strong States

- Authority derives from the states.
- Under a modified Articles of Confederation, the states should remain stronger than the central government

Large States (Virginia Plan)

- Congress should be composed of two houses
- The number of delegates to both houses of Congress should be assigned according to population

vs.

Small States (New Jersey Plan)

- A Congress of one house should be preserved
- Each state should have one vote

Result: The Connecticut (Great) Compromise: Congress composed of two houses:

- Upper house (Senate) based on equal representation (all states have 2 Senators) (benefits small states)
 - Lower house (House of Representatives) based on population (benefits small states)
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North

- Slaves should not be counted when deciding the number of congressional delegates
- Slaves should be counted when levying taxes

South

- Slaves should be counted when determining congressional representation
- Slaves should not be counted when levying taxes

vs.

Result: The 3/5ths Compromise:

- 3/5ths Compromise: Slaves count as 3/5ths of a person for congressional representation of states in the south
- Slave Trade Compromise: Congress had no power to ban the slave trade for 20 years (until 1808)