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**The Virginia Plan**

The Virginia Plan was created by James Madison but presented to the Constitutional Convention by Edmund Randolph, the governor of Virginia, in 1787. This was a proposal for a new form of government and called for the number of votes each state received in Congress to be based on population rather than each state receiving one vote.

The purpose of the plan was to protect the large states' interests in the new government, which would be stronger federally than under the Articles of Confederation. The [Articles of Confederation](http://study.com/academy/lesson/articles-of-confederation-strengths-weaknesses-quiz.html) was the first form of government and had weak federal control; the states had all of the power. The Virginia Plan would change this by creating an entirely new form of government rather than amending the Articles of Confederation. The Virginia Plan was countered with the New Jersey Plan, which called for one vote per state regardless of population, since the smaller states were worried that they would not be equal if the representation of the legislative branch was based on population.

## **Supporters of the Plan**

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Supporters of the Virginia Plan included James Madison, George Washington, Edmund Randolph, and the states of Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. James Madison is known as the Father of the Constitution because he helped frame the Bill of Rights and much of the Constitution. Madison, along with Alexander Hamilton and John Jay, wrote the Federalist Papers, which were persuasive documents asking for a strong federal government.

## **Structure of the Virginia Plan**

The Virginia Plan had 15 resolutions and was based on some of the ideas of French political theorist Montesquieu. It proposed a separation of powers that would be divided among three branches: legislative, executive, and judicial. The plan also included provisions for allowing new states to enter the United States of America. Supporters of the Virginia Plan wanted to have separation of powers as well as checks and balances in order to eliminate the abuse of power and tyranny like they had experienced in Great Britain, as well as to create a strong national government.