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THE GREAT LAW (SHORT VERSION)

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*Or The Body of Laws of the Province of Pennsylvania and Territories thereunto belonging Past at an Assembly held at Chester (Alias Upland) the 7th day of the 10th Month called December 1682*

The short version of The Great Law is from Law Book, 1682-1690 (Patrick Robinson's Book), pages 5-22, in P.H.M.C., Archives, RG-26. It represents those laws which were confirmed by the March, 1683, session of the Assembly, for its numbering agrees with the references to the laws by title and number in chapter 141, 1683 declaring certain laws fundamental, and also in the Petition of Right June 1, 1693. Although the "long version" of the Great Law was the copy adopted in the 1682 session, the Short Version is also carried here since references in subsequent laws (and the notes in this volume) are to chapters 1 through 61 of this copy.

*Whereas* the glory of Almighty God, & the good of Mankind, is the reason & end of government, & therefor government in it Self is a Venerable Ordinance of God. And forasmuch as it is principally desired & intended by the Proprietary & Governour & the freemen of the Province of Pennsylvania & territories therunto belonging, to Make & establish Such Laws, as Shall best preserve true Christian and Civil Liberty, in opposition to all Unchristian Licentious & unjust practices, (Whereby God may have his due, Caesar his due & the people their due) from tyranny & oppression on the one Side & insolencie & Licentiousness on the other, So that the best & firmest foundation may be Lay'd for the present & future happines of both the Governour & people of this Province & territories aforesaid & their posterity.

Be it therefor Enacted by William Penn Proprietary & Governour by & with the Advice & Consent of the deputies of the free-men of this Province & Counties aforesaid in Assembly met, & by the Authority of the same, That these following chapters and Paragraphs Shall be the Laws of Pennsylvania & the territories thereof.