

# Rare copy of Constitution sells for \$9M - Rare copy of the US Constitution sells for \$9 million at auction

October 20, 2024 | Winston-Salem Journal (NC) Author: JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press | Section: A | 767 Words Page: 10 OpenURL Link

ASHEVILLE, N.C. - A rare copy of the U.S. Constitution printed 237 years ago and sent to the states to be ratified was sold for \$9 million at an auction Thursday evening in North Carolina.

Brunk Auctions sold the document, the only copy of its type thought to be privately owned, at a private auction. The name of the buyer was not immediately released.

Bidding took just over seven minutes, with bids coming in at \$50,000 intervals mostly over the phone. There was a pause at \$8.5 million, then another after someone on the phone bid \$9 million.

"Just another second or two. Savor it a little bit selling here at nine million," auctioneer and document owner Andrew Brunk said.

Brunk was thankful. The auction was originally set for Sept. 28 but was delayed after Hurricane Helene caused catastrophic damage throughout Asheville and western North Carolina.

"It's a privilege to have it here," he said. "It's been quite a ride."

The copy was printed after the Constitutional Convention finished drafting the proposed framework of the nation's government in 1787 and sent it to the Congress of the ineffective first American government under the Articles of Confederation, requesting it be sent to the states to be ratified by the people.

It's one of about 100 copies printed by the secretary of that Congress, Charles Thomson. Just eight are known to still exist and the other seven are publicly owned.

Thomson likely signed two copies for each of the original 13 states, essentially certifying them.

What happened to the document up for auction Thursday between Thomson's signature and 2022 is not known.

Two years ago, a property was being cleared out in Edenton in eastern North Carolina that was once owned by Samuel Johnston. He was the governor of North Carolina from 1787 to 1789 and oversaw the state convention during his last year in office that ratified the Constitution.

The copy was found inside a squat, two-drawer metal filing cabinet with a can of stain on top, in a long-neglected room piled high with old chairs and a dusty book case, before the old Johnston house was preserved. The document was a broad sheet that could be folded one time like a book.

Along with the Constitution on the broad sheet printed front and back is a letter from George Washington asking for ratification. He acknowledged there would have to be compromise and that certain rights the states enjoyed would have to be given up for the nation's long-term health.

The Constitution copy wasn't the only seven-figure purchase Thursday.

A watermarked 1776 first draft of the Articles of Confederation went for \$1 million.

Also sold for \$85,000 was a 1788 Journal of the Convention of North Carolina at Hillsborough, where representatives spent two weeks debating whether ratifying the Constitution would put too much power with the federal government instead of the states.

Auction officials were not sure what the Constitution document would go for because there is so little to compare it to. The last time a copy of the Constitution that was sent to the states sold, it was for \$400 in 1891.

In 2021, Sotheby's of New York sold one of only 14 remaining copies of the Constitution printed for the Continental Congress and delegates to the Constitutional Convention for \$43.2 million, a record for a book or document.

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# Poll: Immigration views differ among AAPI adults - Most AAPI adults think legal immigrants give the US a major economic boost: AP-NORC/AAPI Data poll

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WASHINGTON - Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander adults are more likely than the overall U.S. population to view legal immigration as an asset to the country's economy and workforce, according to a new poll.

When it comes to the risks posed by illegal immigration, though, their views are similar to those of Americans overall.

About 8 in 10 AAPI adults say legal immigration to the U.S. is a "major benefit" contributing to economic growth, according to a new survey by AAPI Data and The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. In comparison, about 4 in 10 Americans overall felt the same way in an AP-NORC poll conducted in March. Similarly, about three-quarters of AAPI voters say skilled expertise in science and technology is a major benefit of legal immigration, compared with about 4 in 10 Americans in March.

The polling results come as former President Donald Trump, with less than a month until Election Day, continues to focus on the threat of immigration in his presidential campaign against Vice President Kamala Harris. The Republican recently falsely claimed that the Federal Emergency Management Agency had no money to help Hurricane Helene survivors because it was spent on programs for undocumented immigrants.

During the presidential debate last month, Trump amplified a false rumor that Haitians living legally in Springfield, Ohio, were eating people's pets. The debunked claims led to bomb threats to schools and government buildings, and drew on a long history in the U.S. of maligning immigrant communities through their food.

Aldrin Villahermosa II, 25, and a registered independent in Tacoma, Washington, was "mad and annoyed" when he heard Trump target Haitians that way.

"Immigrants are always targeted for nontraditional foods they eat and now targeting them with domesticated animals brings a whole new level of depravity to all those claims," Villahermosa said.

He also disagrees with the narrative that immigrants who are living in the U.S. illegally don't contribute, or that they take jobs away from Americans.

"One of my really good friends from college is an undocumented immigrant. Currently, he's a public school teacher, a job that doesn't pay well but has an impact on future generations," Villahermosa said. "He plays an important role in the U.S. economy, doing a job a lot of people are shying away from these days because it's low paying and often not gratifying."

But many AAPI adults view illegal immigration very differently. Only about 4 in 10 AAPI adults say immigrants who are in the country without legal permission contribute to economic growth, similar to the share of the general adult population who say the same. Similarly, about one-third of AAPI adults see immigrants who are living in the country illegally as providing expertise of skilled workers, which is on par with the views of Americans overall.

Just under half of AAPI adults say the federal government increasing security at the U.S.-Mexico border should be a "high priority." About the same share say reducing wait times for green card, or permanent legal status, applications should be a top priority.

"What this indicates is that Asian Americans or AAPIs want to see solutions both on the border, but also on all the legal migration pathways," said Karthick Ramakrishnan, founder and executive director of AAPI Data.

Many members of Asian American groups - particularly Chinese, East Indians and Filipinos - are invested in the U.S. immigration system because they often grapple with yearslong waits to sponsor a family member or bring a worker on a special visa, he added.

Guann Su, 45, of Freeport, New York, came to the U.S. legally from Taiwan when he was a child and became a naturalized citizen in 1999. He wants to see other immigrants do things by the book like his family did.

"I'm not saying that all illegal immigrants are taking a shortcut and they are cheating, but I'm just saying that we must follow the rules for everybody," said Su, a Republican. "Because if we start making exceptions, that's where the problems (are) going to start."

He also believes immigrants who are not in the country legally are a major risk in overloading welfare and safety net programs and increasing crime in big cities. About half of AAPI adults and Americans overall say this about such programs, and about 4 in 10 think it's a "major risk" that immigrants who are living in the country without legal permission will commit crimes, although studies have indicated that immigrants are not more likely to commit crimes than people born in the U.S.

On legal immigration, though, AAPI adults who identify with a political party are much more likely than Democrats and Republicans overall to see a major economic benefit. Around 9 in 10 AAPI Democrats say that contributions to economic growth are a "major" benefit of legal immigration, compared with about 6 in 10 Democrats overall. Similarly, about two-thirds of Republican AAPI adults think legal immigration is a major benefit for economic growth, compared with 3 in 10 Republicans overall.

Sophia Cole, 38, of St. Louis, Missouri, is a Republican who plans to vote for Trump. She agrees that legal immigrants tend to be very hardworking.

"That's just what I've seen growing up - how hard the immigrant community works, how they've helped build our foundational cities ... from the East to West Coast," Cole says. "The work ethic, the drive to be American; they really capture the American dream more so than Americans themselves."

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