



The Virginia State Constitution: A Reference Guide (Reference Guides to the State Constitutions of the United States)

John Dinan

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John Dinan, Zachary T. Smith Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at Wake Forest University, analyzes the history and development of the Virginia Constitution and undertakes a detailed treatment of the evolving interpretation of each section, as seen in constitutional conventions, revisions commissions, judicial decisions, attorney general opinions, and legislative and gubernatorial deliberations. He also reveals that few states have made more opportunities than Virginia to engage in constitutional revision and, in the process, to debate fundamental political questions, whether in regard to the rights and liberties to which citizens are entitled, the extent of popular participation in governance, or the means of structuring governmental institutions.

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The first part of the book provides an overview of the development of the Virginia Constitution, and analyzes the principal debates that took place in the Conventions of 1776, 1829-30, 1850-51, 1861, 1864, 1867-68, and 1901-02, the Limited Conventions of 1945 and 1956, and the Revision Commissions of 1927 and 1969. The second part of the book undertakes a detailed treatment of the evolving interpretation of each Section of the Virginia Constitution, as seen in the relevant judicial decisions, attorney general opinions, and legislative and gubernatorial deliberations. Finally, this volume includes a bibliographical essay and table of cases that can assist lawyers, scholars, and students in conducting further research in particular areas.

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