

University of Oklahoma College of Law

University of Oklahoma College of Law Digital Commons

American Indian and Alaskan Native Documents in the Congressional Serial Set: 1817-1899

5-28-1874

Admission of Colorado as a state.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.law.ou.edu/indianserialset>



Part of the [Indigenous, Indian, and Aboriginal Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

H.R. Rep. No. 619, 43d Cong., 1st Sess. (1874)

This House Report is brought to you for free and open access by University of Oklahoma College of Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in American Indian and Alaskan Native Documents in the Congressional Serial Set: 1817-1899 by an authorized administrator of University of Oklahoma College of Law Digital Commons. For more information, please contact Law-LibraryDigitalCommons@ou.edu.

ADMISSION OF COLORADO AS A STATE.

MAY 28, 1874.—Recommended to the Committee on the Territories and ordered to be printed.

Mr. CHAFFEE, from the Committee on the Territories, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill H. R. 435.]

The Committee on the Territories, to whom was referred the bill to enable the people of Colorado to form a constitution and State government, and for admission of the said State into the Union on an equal footing with the original States, report the same to the House, with an amendment by striking out of the fourth section and eighteenth line all after the word "first" to the word "that" in the twenty-first line, and the word "thirdly," and insert "secondly," in the twenty-fourth line, with the recommendation that it pass.

Colorado was organized as a Territory February 28, 1861. In 1864 an enabling act, similar to the bill now pending, was passed for the Territories of Nevada, Nebraska, and Colorado, under which the former two became States. By a lapse of time Colorado failed to be admitted. The bill was again submitted to Congress and passed both Houses twice and was twice vetoed by the President, and thus failed to become a law. The people of the Territory again made application to the Forty-second Congress, but failed to secure admission. Upon a careful examination into the condition of the Territory at present, in respect to its resources, wealth, population, and capability for maintaining a State government, the committee believe it ought to be admitted into the union of States without further delay. It comprises an area of 106,000 square miles, in compact form, lying immediately west of the State of Kansas, and is penetrated from the east by three great lines of railway—the Union Pacific, skirting its northern boundary; the Kansas Pacific, entering the Territory about midway north and south; and the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fé entering the Territory in the great valley of the Arkansas River, in the more southern portion. Beside these, there are several local railways now in operation—the Denver and Rio Grande, running southward from Denver one hundred and twenty-five miles; the Colorado Central, running westward from Denver into the mountains; the Denver Pacific, running northward to Cheyenne, and connecting with the Union Pacific; the Denver and Boulder Valley running northwest to Boulder City; the Denver and South Park running southwest from Denver; the Arkansas Valley, running from Kit Carson to the Arkansas River; also a branch of the Colorado Central, running from Golden City to Longmont—in all six hundred and forty-four miles of completed railway in the Territory at present, with eight other lines and extensions now in process of construction.

There are six lines of railway now centering in the city of Denver. Immigration always follows railroads, and to this is partly due the great increase of population in Colorado during the last three or four years. Lying immediately west of Kansas and Nebraska, and so intimately connected by railroads with those States, their large immigration has been shared by Colorado, possessing as it does a fine climate and great resources. Thousands have sought homes, where to breathe its pure air is to live, and to engage in any business pursuit is to insure prosperity.

The estimated cost of construction of the railways in Colorado, at \$18,000 per mile, is \$11,592,000; gross earnings for the year 1873, \$2,205,000. The following is believed to be a close approximation to the business and condition of the Territory last year:

Products in gold and silver.....	\$5,000,000
Products in cereals.....	6,750,000
Products in live-stock, sale of.....	2,000,000
Products in wool.....	600,000
Products in lumber.....	400,000
Products in flour.....	1,225,000
Products in dairy.....	950,000
Products in manufactures in the city of Denver, alone, (1873).....	3,244,100
	20,174,100

The actual products of the whole Territory will largely exceed the above estimate.

Telegraphs in the Territory, miles.....	1,017
Telegraphs in the Territory, valuation.....	\$203,400
Irrigating canals, miles.....	850
Irrigating canals, valuation.....	\$400,000
Churches.....	125
Churches, valuation.....	\$450,000
Value of reduction, smelting, and separating works.....	\$3,000,000
Values of manufactories, including woolen-mills, paper-mills, planing-mills, sash and door factories, and car-factories.....	\$725,000
The value of cattle returned by the assessors is.....	\$4,295,143
The value of horses returned by the assessors is.....	\$1,405,238
The value of sheep returned by the assessors is.....	\$493,621

The progress made in matters of education is creditable:

Number of school-districts in the Territory.....	243
Number of schools.....	180
Number of school-population.....	15,509
Number of daily attendance.....	7,456
Amount paid teachers for the year 1873.....	\$71,258.28
Value of school-property.....	\$260,183.46
Total school-fund, (exclusive of proceeds of bonds).....	\$137,557.61

The percentage of increase during the years 1872 and 1873 is as follows:

	Per cent.
Schools have increased.....	50
School-districts increased.....	52
School-houses increased.....	56
School-population increased.....	100
School-attendance increased.....	58
Value of school-property increased.....	216

The assessed value of property for 1873 was \$36,000,000; proper assessment, (as per reports of auditor and treasurer,) \$50,000,000; real value of property, (as per reports of auditor and treasurer,) \$70,000,000. Mines not being taxable, the actual valuation of the real wealth of Colorado cannot fall short of \$100,000,000.

It is estimated there are about 7,000,000 acres of land now susceptible

of cultivation, and by a proper system of irrigation, which the State would doubtless inaugurate, the arable area would be increased many millions of acres. The assessor's returns show 946,010 acres of improved land in fifteen counties; the other six counties would swell the amount to nearly 1,500,000 acres, as the counties of Las Animas, Huerfano, Costilla, and Conejos, all agricultural, are not returned. The assessed value of the land returned is \$9,209,944.

The grazing area covers 30,000,000 acres, while gold, silver, copper, lead, marble, lime, gypsum, petroleum, and mineral springs abound throughout an area of 30,000 square miles, with iron and coal deposits equal to those of the States of Missouri and Pennsylvania.

The following have been determined as about the average crop throughout the Territory:

	Bushels per acre.
Wheat.....	28
Oats.....	55
Barley.....	40
Corn.....	35
Potatoes.....	200
Onion.....	250

There are one hundred and sixty-seven post-offices in the Territory, nine of which are presidential, being salaried at over \$1,000, and two salaried as high as Philadelphia or Chicago, the business of the Denver office amounting to about \$500,000 per year; there are thirteen post-offices the salaries of which range from \$500 to \$900 each.

There are ten national banks, twenty-seven private bankers, and five savings-banks in the Territory. The exchange drawn during the year 1873 by the three national banks of Denver alone amounted to \$22,500,000.

The Territory is in good financial condition. No territorial tax was levied in 1872, and only one and a half mill in 1873. There is a balance in the treasury of upward of \$25,000. Thus it will be seen that the progress of Colorado in population, in the development of her farms, mines, and manufactures, and in general industries has reached an attainment such as no Western Territory knocking for admission has been able to present.

Educational interests have been carefully guarded. There is a territorial superintendent of schools, county superintendents, and school boards in all districts. A thorough system of graded schools is in operation in all the large towns. Denver has over 3,000 school children enrolled. There are four large school-buildings, the largest seating 900 scholars, and costing upward of \$100,000, and the three others averaging in cost about \$20,000 each. Fine school-buildings and excellent schools will be found everywhere throughout the Territory. There are also several seminaries and collegiate institutes, and many private schools. Several of the towns maintain public libraries and reading-rooms.

There are seven daily, thirty-one weekly, and five monthly newspapers and periodicals printed in Colorado.

The last census shows a population of only 39,864, but on account of the limited means and small compensation for taking the same as was the case in all sparsely-settled localities, the returns show far less than the actual population at the time. The number returned in the county of Arapahoe, one of the most populous in the Territory, was 6,829; while in the city of Denver alone, situated in said county, by a census taken the following autumn, under the approval of city council, the population was shown to be 10,832. The aggregate vote at the delegate

election the next year was upward of 11,000, while the registered vote showed about 15,000 qualified voters under the law. At the ratio fixed by the census, of 1 to 4.26, the committee are led to believe the actual population of Colorado in the spring of 1870 could not have been less than 60,000. The growth and prosperity of the Territory date back to the last four or five years, the earlier settlement having been very much retarded by constant Indian wars and the war of the rebellion.

Five years ago there was not one mile of railway-track resting upon Colorado's surface. At the time the census was taken there was not one completed line of railway within her borders. The prosperity of Colorado for the last three or four years has been unexampled, except, perhaps, in the early settlement of California.

The growth of the ten principal towns in the Territory may be gathered from the following table :

Towns.	1870.	1873.	Towns.	1870.	1873.
Denver.....	4,759	20,000	Golden.....	587	2,850
Pueblo.....	666	4,000	Greeley.....	480	1,500
Georgetown.....	802	3,500	Evans.....	189	1,200
Central.....	2,369	3,100	Boulder.....	343	1,120
Trinidad.....	450	1,200	Cañon City.....	229	950

Since the census of 1870 over forty new towns have been laid out, some of them being already large and prosperous, with banks, newspapers, daily mails, churches, schools, and other accompaniments of thrifty and intelligent communities. Among these are Colorado Springs, with a population of over 1,200; Longmont, 1,000; West Las Animas, 800; Caribou, 650; Del Norte, 800; and Granada, 750.

The whole population of the Territory, by counties, with the official census of 1870, and the census of 1873 based upon the vote at the last election, will be seen in the subjoined table :

Counties.	Census 1870.	Census 1873.
Arapahoe.....	6,829	25,000
Bent.....	591	3,850
Boulder.....	1,939	5,325
Clear Creek.....	1,596	5,500
Conejos.....	2,504	3,800
Costilla.....	1,779	3,350
Douglas.....	1,388	3,100
El Paso.....	987	3,450
Fremont.....	1,064	3,800
Gilpin.....	5,490	7,500
Greenwood.....	510	600
Huerfano.....	2,250	3,550
Jefferson.....	2,390	6,230
Lake.....	522	875
Larimer.....	838	3,250
Las Animas.....	4,276	5,780
Park.....	447	2,800
Pueblo.....	2,265	8,950
Saguache.....	304	2,000
Summit.....	258	1,050
Weld.....	1,636	5,100
Total.....	39,864	104,860

It will be seen by the above table that the population of Colorado at the time of the registry for election in August, 1873, was about 105,000. It is the estimate of the board of immigration, and other competent authorities, that the increase in population since August has averaged 3,000 per month. That being so, the population of Colorado, January 1, 1874, must be from 117,000 to 120,000. From all accounts the immigration of this season will far exceed that of any previous year, and, as the greatest permanent accessions are between February and July, it seems safe to say that by midsummer, 1874, the population of Colorado will exceed 150,000.

At the last general election for members of the legislature, September 12, 1873, the aggregate vote polled was 20,544, while the registration of legal voters amounted to upwards of 25,000. A residence of six months being required, none who arrived in the Territory after March 12 of that year were registered. The immigration to Colorado last year is estimated by the board of immigration to average 3,000 a month, so that the actual voting population of Colorado cannot be less than 30,000 or 35,000.

As a further evidence of the rapid growth of the Territory, the following table of increase of salary to the different postmasters, under the present re-adjustment to take effect July 1, 1874, as indicated by the returns of the offices, is furnished by the Post-Office Department for fourteen offices, showing a fair average of increase throughout the Territory :

COLORADO.

Office.	Present salary.	Salary after July 1, 1874, as indicated by returns.
Canyon City	\$490	\$740
Caribou	390	690
Colorado Springs	2, 100	2, 600
Del Norte	180	420
Fair Play	430	820
Fort Collins	120	600
Fort Lyon	330	680
Golden City	1, 200	1, 800
Greeley	1, 400	1, 700
Grant	20	270
Grenada	12	420
Las Animas	360	820
Monument	91	330
Pueblo	2, 000	3, 000
Sedalia	12	120

The committee are fully satisfied that the present population is equal to the number required by the present ratio of representation in Congress, and that before Colorado can be admitted under the provisions of this bill the population will equal if not exceed 200,000.

No State or Territory has a more intelligent, energetic, and thrifty population, and upon the basis of 150,000 they possess more than three times the wealth per capita of the people of any Territory at the date of admission into the Union.

The Territory has paid into the Treasury of the United States over \$1,000,000 by taxation; and contributed more than its quota without draft to the Federal Army to conquer the rebellion, and always responded promptly when called upon to perform the *duties* of citizens, and now the people believe themselves entitled to the *privileges* enjoyed by citizens of the other States of the Union.

The voting population of Colorado is greater than in one-half the congressional districts of the Union. The committee is of the opinion that if the older States, requiring less local or special legislation, are allowed members, some of them upon even less than one-half the present ratio, the rapidly-growing Territory of Colorado should not be denied the same rights, supported by stronger reasons, all being claimed under the Constitution.

Population alone is not the proper or sole test for the admission of new States. The character of the people and prospects for immediate growth and development of the proposed State should be controlling considerations. There can be no doubt of the future growth and prosperity of Colorado. Few States had the population when admitted or possessed the wealth Colorado now has. The committee can see no sound reason why a new or different rule should be applied to Territories now or hereafter seeking admission.

The basis of representation in the House of Representatives is arbitrary. The number of members must be increased from time to time, or the basis of representation must be enlarged. Can this arbitrary ratio affect the ability of a Territory to maintain a State government; or should it, by rigid application, in all cases, prevent citizens of the United States from enjoying the benefits of a State government?

If this principle were strictly adhered to, it would seriously affect some of the oldest States; for it is not improbable that at the end of this decade there will be members upon this floor representing less than fifty thousand people; while some western members will represent three hundred thousand to four hundred thousand as is the case in the present Congress. The rapid increase of population might forever deny any Territory admission, provided Congress should not increase the number of Representatives.

In view of these facts, and having been invited into the Union by the act of 1864, with a population of less than one-third it has at present, and less than one-third the wealth, with no railroads, and with much less internal improvements and permanent industry, the committee believe that justice to that people requires the passage of this bill.

The bill is in the usual form, and authorizes the people to elect delegates to frame a constitution, provides for its submission, and, if ratified the fact being certified by the governor to the President of the United States, he is authorized to proclaim it a State of the Union.

○