

Connecticut



Connecticut was the 5th colony to ratify the U.S. Constitution by a vote of 128-40 on Jan 09, 1788.

The Connecticut state flag displays the Arms of the State on each side. It measures five feet, six inches long and four feet, four inches wide. The field is azure blue; the armorial bearing (shield) is argent white and described by law as "rococo design." Rococo refers to style distinguished by fancy curves and elaborate ornamentation. Three supported grape vines are depicted on the shield, each bearing three bunches of grapes. The rococo shield is outlined in gold and silver and is decorated with clusters of white oak leaves and acorns. A white streamer, cleft at each end and bordered in gold and brown, is displayed below the shield. The motto of the state of Connecticut is lettered in dark blue on the streamer. It reads *Qui Transtulit Sustinet* (He who transplanted still sustains).

Symbolic elements of the flag are represented by the three grape vines and their supports, white oak leaves and acorns, and the Connecticut state motto.

Perhaps the most prominent feature of the Arms of the State are the three grape vines positioned in the center of the shield. Historically, these grape vines were passed down from a seal brought from England by Colonel George Fenwick in 1639. Colonel Fenwick's seal served as the seal of the Saybrook Colony and was passed on for the use of the Connecticut Colony around 1644. It is thought by some that the number of supported grape vines represents three colonies, New Haven, Saybrook and Connecticut (Hartford), which merged as "Connecticut" by 1665. Grapes are symbolic of good luck, felicity and peace--evidence of God's kindness and the goodness of providence. Vines represent strong and lasting friendships. Of course, grape vines are often associated with wine makers.

Qui Transtulit Sustinet was also inherited from the Fenwick seal. This Latin phrase has been translated as "He who transplanted continues to sustain" or, more commonly, "He who transplanted still sustains". In the *Connecticut State Register and Manual, 1889: Register and Manual of the State of Connecticut*, it was written by Charles J. Hoadly that the motto is an adaptation of *Psalms*, Chapter 79, Verse 3 of the *Latin Vulgate Version of the Bible*. In the article titled *The Public Seal of Connecticut*, he wrote:

"The vines [on the State Seal] symbolize the Colony brought over and planted here in the wilderness. We read in the 80th Psalm: 'Thou has brought a vine out of Egypt: Thou has cast out the heathen, and planted it':--in Latin, 'Vineam de AEgypto transtulisti, Ejicisti gentes et Plantasti eam'; and the motto expresses our belief that He who brought over the vine continues to take care of it--*Qui transtulit sustinet*."

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Symbolic of faith and endurance, age (antiquity) and strength, the white oak leaves and acorns were not present on the Fenwick seal but the oak does occur another time in Connecticut's colonial history in the story of the Charter Oak that was made the official state tree in 1947.

The adoption of an official state flag in Connecticut was without controversy and without much fanfare. And it wasn't rushed either.

Connecticut became the 5th colony to ratify the United States Constitution on January 9, 1788. Over 100 years later, the state had adopted no official description for a state flag. The Anna Warner Bailey Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, now centered in Groton, decided that this needed to be changed. They approached Governor O. William Coffin with their thoughts on the subject and persuaded him to take action. According to the Anna Warner Bailey Chapter's web site, they were responsible for the design of the flag.

On May 29, 1895, over 100 years after Connecticut had become one of the thirteen original colonies, Governor Coffin introduced the first proposal for a state flag to the Connecticut General Assembly. That same day, the Assembly passed a resolution appointing a special committee to prepare specifications that matched the flag that was already generally accepted as the state flag. It wasn't until 1897, however, that the specifications were made official. The adopted law read as follows:

"The following-described flag is the official flag of the State. The dimensions of the flag shall be five feet and six inches in length; four feet and four inches in width. The flag shall be of azure blue silk, charged with a shield of rococo design of argent white silk, having embroidered in the center three grape vines, supported and bearing fruit in natural colors. The bordure to the shield shall be embroidered in two colors, gold and silver. Below the shield shall be a white streamer, cleft at each end, bordered by gold and browns in fine lines, and upon the streamer shall be embroidered in dark blue letters the motto "QUI TRANSTULIT SUSTINET"; the whole design being the arms of the state."

In 1990, the law describing the flag was modified slightly. [Compare the versions](#) of the law to see what changed.