

Letters

K. Quinn: Getting the facts right

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[Letters](#) | Friday, May 8, 2015

An Article V convention for proposing constitutional amendments is not a Constitutional Convention, as some people claim.

Many people innocently believe they are the same because they have never researched the history of an Article V convention. Other people make the claim out of a motive to alarm the passions of others to make them fear the process in order to maintain the status quo.

Let's not be misled by ignorance or fear any longer. Here are the facts:

- The framers rejected a motion to give Article V the same power as a Constitutional Convention on Sept. 15, 1787. See Notes of Debates in the Federal Convention of 1787, reported by James Madison.
- An Amendment Convention requires two-thirds of the states to call, whereas a Constitutional Convention requires unanimous consent of the states that are to be bound to it.
- Amendments are passed by a simple majority versus Constitution, which is passed unanimously by the states that are present.
- Amendments are passed and ratified by the states individually versus Constitution, which is passed and ratified by the states as a whole entire document.
- Amendments are ratified by three quarters of the states and bind all the states versus Constitution, which only binds states that ratify it.
- Article V clearly states “convention for proposing amendments,” not a Constitutional Convention.
- Article V clearly states that amendments become “part of this Constitution when Ratified...” not a new Constitution.

Let's not allow the naysayers to prevent the public from doing what is right.

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Editor's note: Quinn is state director of the Convention of States Project.

