Convention of States Project Wiki

Initial Brainstorming Ideas

1) **Problems to be addressed, by audience:**
   a. Legislators
      i. Increase the speed at which we can respond to legislator questions.
      ii. Synthesize / re-organize content into shorter articles which can be consumed more easily by lawmakers, yet with links out to more details for those who wish to search further down the path.
      iii. Provide a public site for linking important articles within e-mails we send to legislators.

   b. Prospects
      i. Allow prospects to get a quick overview but drill to detailed articles where they have questions.
      ii. Some of our prospects who are more adept at constitutional research may find the COS website a little too "slick" and marketing oriented – which is a frequent accusation by the opposition. The Wiki, though presented simply, will also dive down into details quickly.

   c. Volunteer Education (inoculation and armaments)
      i. COS knowledge exists in pockets and is not being efficiently shared with supporters. Some people know some things while others know other things. There is no single repository of knowledge. The COS website has a lot of content, but is woefully inaccessible to those researching the COS effort.
      ii. We occasionally lose volunteers to the opposition. We need to inoculate our volunteers with knowledge. On the flip side, we need our volunteers to actively counter the opposition wherever they can.
      iii. FAQ's on COS website are incomplete, difficult to consume and do not provide enough links to supporting content, for those who wish to find information in original content.

   d. Social Media Warriors:
      i. SMW's working the chat system need better access to all COS knowledge, instead of hunting / pecking through the COS website and/or other websites.
      ii. SMW's work too hard to find answers to questions.
      iii. SMW's need a place to publish new information / articles.
      iv. SMW's need a repository to which we can link when rebutting arguments. We should not be depending on personal blog sites.

   e. Media / Public Relations
      i. How can this be used in our favor towards the media?

    ii. Are there any downfalls?

  f. Opposition
    i. We have to be careful to not give any "ammo" to the opposition. Careful review of the published documents is important.
    ii. No public comments will be allowed. This is NOT a blog.   If people have suggested edits, they must be submitted for consideration, review and careful incorporation when truthful and helpful to the cause.

  g. Internal Organization
    i. We need a central place for "how to" documents and best practices, such as how to order materials, presentation materials, how to conduct a meeting.

2) Solution

  a. Gather all COS knowledge into a single place.
  b. Both public portion published and searchable and "internal" portion (separate site?)
  c. No highly sensitive information (e.g., legislative strategies, CTA's, contact lists, etc.) unless they are reliably secured.
  d. Provide "bullet-proof" argumentation
    i. We are humans and will make some mistakes, but we don't want a sentence in an article being taken out of context and appearing on some opposition website.
  e. Ongoing curation of the content to keep it consumable and organized.

3) Strategy

  a. Content Outline – see the end of the document for a starting point for discussion.

  b. Usability of Content:
    i. 7th or 8th Grade reading level.
    ii. Average article length: 1 page or less. Average of ½ page if possible.
    iii. Build a "hierarchy of knowledge". Start at the summary levels and drill to lower level details. At the leaf levels would be original documents.
    iv. Keep the content short and "consumable", link out to other articles and provide citations at the bottom of the articles.
    v. Look at this Wikipedia page to start generating ideas: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nullification_(U.S._Constitution)

  c. Content Creation and Approval Process:
    i. Super-admin maintained by a few people within national (to ensure absolute control at the national level).
    ii. Limited number of volunteer authors and editors with login ids (see staffing below). Authors and editors must be strongly vetted – at the same level as State Directors or other state-level volunteers to ensure their absolute loyalty.

iii. Start off by re-organizing all of the current COS content into shorter articles with 7th-grade or 8th grade reading levels.   Only after all of the current content is re-structured into the solution should we start adding new information.
iv. We will need a process: draft, review and final approval.
 v. We need to implement a process for people to suggest edits and for us to process those suggestions into existing content.   We will need to prioritize, draft, review and then publish the revisions.
vi. We will need knowledgeable people at authors and experts for the review and final approval.

d.   Deadline/Goal:
i. Have the "core" information published by November, 6-8 weeks prior to the start of the legislative session.
ii. We may release the content in phases.

e.   Staffing:
i. Estimate of 250 to 500 1/2–page articles over 6 months, or about 40 to 80 articles per month.
ii. Need about 20 people to write 2 to 4 articles per month.

1. Mostly volunteers.

2. Potential authors include:

a. Jerry Rowe, Rick Bulow, Eugene Cloud, Diane Gomez, Ken Mayo, Marshall Willis, Tina Nixon, Ian Cone, Cristi Landoll, Morton Goldberg (TN volunteer), David Schneider, Tommy Buch, Brenda MacMenamin, Frank Pearsall, Susan Valliant, Michael Murphy, Bruce Hubbell, Dianne Gomez, Garrett Humbertson, Tricia Anthone, Michael Murphy, Marshall Willis,

3. I suggest that each State Director also identify at least one person from each state to dedicate to the effort.

4. Each should be PERSONALLY vetted for their loyalty and personally approved of by their State Director or above.

5. Each candidate will each need to submit a sample of their writing.

iii. Need 5 to 10 experts to review 2 to 4 articles each per month.
1. Mostly State Directors and above.   They need to be deeply versed in the opposition arguments and answers, to ensure our writing is "airtight".

2. Candidate reviewers include: Bob Menges, Ken Quinn, Rita Dunaway, Scott Williams, Mike Ruthenburg, Jordan Sillers, Tamara Colbert. Others?

f. Technical
   i. Software:
      1. We need to write a requirements document. What do we want the software to do for us? Here is a starting point which needs to be fleshed out:
         a. Security:
            i. Authors, reviewers, publishers, admins
            ii. Integrated into Nationbuilder security or independent?
         b. Document types:
            i. Text
            ii. MS Office documents
            iii. PDF's
            iv. Audio
            v. Video
         c. Page Layout
            i. Standard templates
            ii. Custom pages as needed
         d. Authoring process
            i. Draft documents:
               1. Simple, WYSIWYG authoring
               2. See how the revised version fits in with current content (including full navigation to/from existing documents which are not being modified)
            ii. Review with notations/comments and return to author.
            iii. Re-draft and resubmit with changes.
            iv. Re-review
            v. Final Review
            vi. Publishing

      2. Leaning towards a "wiki" solution. Works like Wikipedia, but would be our own our wiki, separate from Wikipedia. Installed on our own server and at our own URL. Possible "wiki" solutions include:

         a. MediaWiki
         b. DocuWiki
         c. Tiki

      3. The software will be installed by Michael Tranchina and controlled by national.

   ii. Hardware

1. Requires web server hosting. This will need to be provided by National and coordinated through Michael Tranchina.

iii. Need to select a domain. Available domains include:
1. Wiki.conventionofstates.com (I prefer this one)
2. ArticleVWiki.com (not as crazy about this one)

Content Outline

External/Public Content

1) Problem.

a. Discuss all of the current issues with our existing government and the sources to those issues. We have to know what is wrong in order to fix it!

b. Presenting problems

  i. Spending and Debt Crisis
  ii. Regulatory Crisis
  iii. Congressional Attacks on State Sovereignty
  iv. Federal takeover of the Decision-making process.

c. Trace each of the above back into root causes:

  i. Supreme Court decisions (Welfare Clause, Commerce Clause, etc.)

  ii. Lack of Term Limits

  iii. 17th amendment

  iv. 16th amendment

2) Solution:

a. Article V process: discuss how the process works and possible concerns about the logistics at each step of the process and common objections by naysayers: (e.g., not a "runaway" convention with links to arguments and documents).

  i. States submit applications on specific topics.

    1. https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates/pages/142/attachments/original/1416248525/COS_Handbook.pdf?1416248525

  ii. Congress aggregates by topic.

  iii. When 34 states call for a convention on the same topic, Congress calls the convention at a certain date and location.

  iv. Commissioners Selected and Instructed.

    1. Each state selects Commissioners to send

    2. Each state instructs their delegates

        a. Discuss "Faithful Delegate" Laws.

  v. Commissioners meet at the appointed place and date.

  vi. Commissioners use "one-state, one-vote" to select a leader.

  vii. Commissioners use "one-state, one-vote" to set rules.

viii. Commissioners propose, review and approve amendments

    1. Amendments not germane to the convention applications are excluded.

    2. Amendments are reviewed and modified.

    3. Amendments receiving a majority vote of the states are approved.

ix. When all proposed amendments have been approved (or rejected), the convention is closed and approved amendments are sent to Congress

x. Congress selects ratification methods for each amendment

xi. Ratification begins in the states.

xii. Note: Throughout all of the above, we need to discuss Rob Natelson's research on how the conventions prior to 1787 were run.

b. Discuss other possible solutions and why they won't work:

    i. "Teach more people about the constitution"

    ii. "Elect Better Officials",

    iii. Nullification

    iv. Interposition

    v. Secession

c. Organized Article V efforts (brief review / overview / status). Describe the groups behind the effort and the odds for success.

    i. Balanced Budget Amendment

    ii. COS

    iii. WolfPac

    iv. etc.

d. Possible Amendments

    i. Note: I don't believe we can just say "trust us, there are many good amendments would could be passed". I know that at the same time we should not support specific amendments / wording. We don't want the COS shot down because we are supporting specific wording which could be challenged. We need to at least discuss some ideas for some amendments.

    ii. This would be a great place to collect and discuss ideas.

    iii. Include (at least), a link to Mark Levin's Liberty Amendments

    iv. Tie each into the three areas in the COS call (showing they are germane): term limits, power and jurisdiction of federal government and fiscal contraints.

    v. Categorize the ideas in some way -- maybe by branch of government.

    vi. List amendments which would NOT be germane (e.g., protection for the Bill of Rights)

e. Document Library

i. Founding Documents. Inventory of founding documents with links.

ii. COS Documents

    1. Basic Documents

        a. COS Handbook:
https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates/pages/142/attachments/original/1416248525/COS_Handbook.pdf?1416248525

        b. Application for a COS:
https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates/pages/142/attachments/original/1410009563/Application-for-a-Convention-of-States-v.5.pdf?1410009563

        c. COS Endorsements Handout:
https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates/pages/142/attachments/original/1416188443/COS_Endorsements_handout.pdf?1416188443

        d. Legislative Process Handout:
https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates/pages/142/attachments/original/1410009862/Legislative-Process-1_0.pdf?1410009862

        e. Convention of States PowerPoint:
https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates/pages/142/attachments/original/1410009862/Legislative-Process-1_0.pdf?1410009862

    2. COS Opposition Documents

        a. Frequently Asked Questions:

            i. http://www.conventionofstates.com/frequently_asked_questions

            ii. http://www.conventionofstates.com/faqs

        b. Short Answers to Common Article V Questions

            i. http://www.conventionofstates.com/short_answers_to_common_questions

            ii. https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates/pages/1002/attachments/original/1424900935/Short_Answers_to_Common_Questions.pdf?1424900935

        c. JBS Answers:

            i. http://www.conventionofstates.com/answers_to_john_birch_society

            ii. http://www.conventionofstates.com/answers_to_jbs_arguments

d. Real Answers to Article V Questions

    i. http://www.conventionofstates.com/real_answers_to_article_v_questions

    ii. https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates/pages/1003/attachments/original/1424902038/Real_Answers_to_Article_V_Questions.pdf?1424902038

e. The States Control an Article V COS

    i. http://www.conventionofstates.com/the_states_control

    ii. https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates/pages/145/attachments/original/1410015958/States-Control-Article-V.pdf?1410015958

f. Answering the Runaway Convention Myth

    i. http://www.conventionofstates.com/can_we_trust_the_constitution

    ii. https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates/pages/145/attachments/original/1410015954/Can-We-Trust-the-Constitution-2.01.pdf?1410015954

g. Is "Nullification" the Answer:

    i. http://www.conventionofstates.com/is_nullification_the_answer

    ii. https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates/pages/145/attachments/original/1410016670/nullification-response1.pdf?1410016670

h. An Article V Convention Can Be Limited

    i. http://www.conventionofstates.com/an_article_v_convention_can_be_limited

    ii. https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates/pages/899/attachments/original/1423177477/Kelly__Single_Subject_Convention.pdf?1423177477

i. We know the Rules: Congress Does Not Control a Convention of States

    i. http://www.conventionofstates.com/we_know_the_rules_congress_does_not_control

    ii. https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates/pages/145/attachments/original/1410016830/Response-to-EF-Handout.pdf?1410016830

j. What if Congress Refuses to Call an Article V Convention

      i. http://www.conventionofstates.com/what_if_congress_ref uses_to_call_a_convention

      ii. https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates /pages/145/attachments/original/1410016956/What-if-Congress-Refuses.pdf?1410016956

  k. One-State, One-Vote, regardless of population size

      i. http://constitution.i2i.org/2015/02/06/trying-to-abolishing-the-convention%E2%80%99s-one-stateone-vote-rule-not-only-would-be-unconstitutional%E2%80%94it-wouldn%E2%80%99t-be-worth-trying/

  l. Liberal Establishment's Disinformation Campaign Against Article V

      i. http://www.conventionofstates.com/the_liberal_establishm ent_s_disinformation_campaign_against_article_v

      ii. https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates /pages/145/attachments/original/1430418730/Campaign-Against-Article-V_Natelson.pdf?1430418730

  m. Response to NAGR

      i. http://www.conventionofstates.com/response_to_the_nati onal_association_for_gun_rights

      ii. https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates /pages/1037/attachments/original/1425661004/Menges__ NAGR_Response.pdf?1425661004

  n. Response to Joanna Scutari

      i. http://www.conventionofstates.com/response_to_article_b y_publius_huldah

  o. Congressional Research Service Report on Article V

      i. http://www.conventionofstates.com/congressional_resear ch_service_report

      ii. https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates /pages/145/attachments/original/1410016827/CRS-Response.pdf?1410016827

  p. Article V Legislative Compendium

      i. https://www.dropbox.com/s/n1tqrzddjnguob0/Compendiu m%202.2.pdf?dl=0

iii. Audio

    1. Before the Convention: Mythbusting: http://www.mediafire.com/?56bsle9c4xrbacp

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During the Convention: We Know the Rules: http://www.mediafire.com/?hgsxo5z7gmfkn93
After the Convention: A Vision for the Future: http://www.mediafire.com/?taxdy4emnb2lvep
Michael Farris Debates Andy Schlafly in New Jersey: https://www.dropbox.com/s/z4arv04db35o68q/AUDIO%20Michael%20Farris%20Debates%20Andy%20Schlafly.mp3?dl=0

iv. Third-party Documents

1. Natelson's documents
2. Documents by others.

3) Strategy.

a. COS Strategy not just to call a convention, but to also influence the convention and influence the ratification process.

b. Status by State?

c. Get Involved

    i. Petition:

        1. Sign the Petition Online: http://www.cosaction.com/

        2. Paper Petition: https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/conventionofstates/pages/142/attachments/original/1425408838/Convention_of_States_Petition.pdf?1425408838

    ii. Create your account: http://www.conventionofstates.com/create_your_account

    iii. Activist dashboard: http://www.conventionofstates.com/dashboard

    iv. Volunteer: http://www.conventionofstates.com/volunteer

    v. Volunteer Team Sign Up: http://www.conventionofstates.com/volunteer_teams

    vi. Be a Leader: http://www.conventionofstates.com/be_a_leader

d. Training

    i. District Captain Video Training: http://www.conventionofstates.com/training_calendar

e. Events

    i. http://www.conventionofstates.com/state_events

4) Education

a. United States Constitution (outline from Wikipedia – could be adjusted -- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nullification_(U.S._Constitution))

    i. Articles

  ii. Amendments
  iii. Principles
    1. Separation of powers
    2. Individual rights
    3. Rule of law
    4. Federalism
    5. Republicanism
  iv. Government Structure
    1. Legislative Branch
    2. Executive Branch
    3. Judicial Branch
    4. State Governments
  v. Individual Rights
    1. See wikipedia
  vi. Interpretation Theories
    1. Living Constitution
    2. Originalism
    3. Purposivism
    4. Textualism
    5. Strict Constructionism
 b. Madison's Notes
 c. Federalist Papers
 d. Etc.

Internal

1) Job Descriptions
2) Procedures