



CONVENTION of STATES

A PROJECT OF CITIZENS FOR SELF-GOVERNANCE

CONVENTION OF STATES PROJECT

Our Aspirational goals are as follows:

1. The people organize and restore representative government as defined in our written Constitution.
2. Restore a culture of self-governance in America.
3. Inspire a political and spiritual awakening in America.

Article V of the Constitution allows the States to form a Convention for the purpose of reining in the Federal Government and reducing its scope and power.

Attached is a brief summary of the problems and the solutions possible with a State Convention.

If you agree, please get involved. For this to happen, we must build an engaged army of self-governing grassroots activists.

You can get more information at www.conventionofstates.com. There is a petition on the website that you can sign.

Locally, we will be meeting with our local state representatives, talking to groups, rallying in Harrisburg, meeting with our representatives in Harrisburg, calling our representative's offices when timely, etc. We are currently trying to get the COS resolution thru the State of PA this year.

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Thank you,

Bob Ritter

PROBLEMS OF FEDERAL GOV'T. SYSTEM AND CORRECTIONS BY CONVENTION OF STATES

1. Debt is 20 trillion and growing. Spending is out of control. Congress just passed a budget spending more money. The Congress no longer meets in Appropriations Committees to determine and scrutinize where money is spent. Baseline budgeting is used. If the budget is set to increase 7 percent and members of Congress attempt to change the increase to 4 percent, Congress declares they are cutting the budget, even though spending is increasing 4 percent.

This debt is very dangerous. Many foreign countries buy the debt, putting our country in a very vulnerable position. If interest rates rise, the Fed. Govt. interest costs go up, increasing the debt more, just to cover interest costs. This can become unmanageable. Circumstances can occur where this debt can severely harm the economy. Greece is a good example of what can happen.

Is it moral to leave this debt to our children, grandchildren, and future generations?

Possible Amendment: Limit Federal Spending and Taxing – Total outlays of the Federal Government for any fiscal year shall not exceed its receipts for that year. Outlays shall not exceed 17.5% of the National Gross Domestic Product. Limit on debt shall not be increased unless 3/5 of Congress votes for this. The Federal Government shall not collect more than 15% of a person's annual income for income tax. The deadline for filing federal income tax shall be the day before the date of federal elections. The Federal Government is prohibited from using Federal Withholding to collect tax revenue. Congress shall not institute a value added tax or a national sales tax or any other tax in kind or form.

2. Career Politicians are no longer citizen legislators with their constituents as their primary concern. Many Congressman and Senators spend 40 years or more in their elected positions. Upon winning a seat, their most important job is to raise money and develop connections to influence the next election. These actions make it very difficult for another candidate to win an election. Also, Committee assignments go to legislators that raise the most money. As a result, big companies and wealthy individuals have much more influence than the average citizen. Because of these developments, a separate Federal culture and society has evolved where the most important goal is the expansion of the scope and power of the Federal Government. This occurs with no concern whether it is good for the country and/or its citizens.

Possible Amendment: Establish Term Limits for Members of Congress – Limited to 12 years in Congress, either House and/or Senate.

3. The Supreme Court has expanded its scope and power far beyond that originally intended by the Constitution. Instead of just ruling on whether a law follows the original intent of the Constitution, the Supreme Court is frequently deciding cases with no basis established in the Constitution. In other words, they are legislating from the bench. The Commerce Clause in the Constitution is a major example of this abuse of power. Also, the Supreme Court has decided that it is the final arbiter of social issues such as Marriage, Religion, Abortion, schooling for Aliens, etc. The Supreme Court has also become part of the separate Federal society and culture. Its main goal is the expansion of the scope and power of the Federal Government. The separation of powers of the separate branches, a major safeguard for limited government in the

Constitution, has broken down. Further, justices have a life-long assignment. They stay on the bench into their eighties.

Possible Amendment: Establish Term Limits for Supreme Court Justices and Super-Majority Legislative Overrides – Limited to 12 years. Upon 3/5 vote of Congress, may override a majority opinion of Supreme Court. Upon vote of 30 State Legislatures, may override a majority opinion of Supreme Court.

Possible Amendment: Promote Free Enterprise – Congress’s power to regulate Commerce is a specific grant of power limited to preventing States from impeding commerce and trade between and among the several states. Congress’s power to regulate Commerce does not extend to activity within a state, whether or not it affects interstate commerce; nor does it extend to compelling an individual or entity to participate in commerce or trade.

4. The Federal Bureaucracy, all federal departments and agencies, continue to grow in scope and power. The size of these agencies make them unmanageable. There is virtually no Congressional oversight of them. These agencies create and enforce the rules and regulations of laws passed by Congress. Congress is rarely involved in the implementation of the laws that they pass. This gives great power to these agencies filled with unelected people. In the last ten years, these agencies have created one million pages of new rules and regulations. They also create new fees on businesses they regulate. They can increase these fees in any amount and at any time. These agencies have the power to implement and enforce fines, both civil and criminal. They have unlimited time and money to enforce these rules and regulations.

Possible Amendment: Limit the Federal Bureaucracy – All federal departments and agencies shall expire If said department or agency is not individually reauthorized in stand-alone reauthorization bills every 3 years by a majority of Congress. All executive branch regulations exceeding an economic burden of \$100 million shall be submitted to a Permanent Joint Committee of Congress for review and approval prior to their implementation.

5. Over the last 100 years, as the Federal Government has grown in scope and power, they are forcing States to implement and pay for programs created by the Federal Government. The States have no protection from this, nor can they contribute their opinions to the creation of these programs. As a result, the States have lost a lot of their freedom and independence. One of the reasons for this is the manner of election of Federal Senators. In the original Constitution, the State Legislatures elected the Senators. The founders wanted the Senators to represent and protect their State. This was a direct way that the States had input and control over the Federal Government. The 17th Amendment, passed in 1913, changed the election of the Senators to a public election. This practically removed any input and protection the States had from the power of the Federal Government.

Possible Amendment: Grant to States the Authority to Check Congress – Upon vote of 30 State Legislatures, the States may override a Federal Statute. Upon vote of 30 State Legislatures, the States may override Executive Branch regulations exceeding an economic burden of \$100 million.

Possible Amendment: Restore the Senate – Repeal the 17th Amendment. A Senator may be removed from office by a 2/3 vote of the State Legislature.³