

The Fascinating Story of How the States Used the Constitution's Amendment Procedure to Adopt Reform, 1789-1913

Common sense tells us that an out-of-control Congress is not going to rein in its own power. The American Founders predicted this might become the case, so they [provided a way by which the state legislatures could propose and ratify corrective constitutional amendments without Congress being able to stop them](#).

This is the “state-application-and-convention” procedure of the Constitution's Article V.

I became interested in this under-researched and much-misunderstood procedure about two years ago. Since that time I've done an incredible amount of historical and legal research on the topic, and published several articles about how the procedure is designed to work.

Although we've never had an Article V convention, the states have issued hundreds of applications for amendments conventions, and in doing so have forced some important changes. Also, the courts have issued many Article V cases, which shed valuable light on the subject.

Check out my newly-published Independence Institute paper: [Amending the Constitution by Convention: Lessons for Today from the Constitution's First Century](#). It tells the fascinating story about how the states used the process between 1789 and 1913—sometimes with great success. This II paper is an amended version of an earlier study done for our friends at the [Goldwater Institute](#), who have done much to promote public education about this little-known part of the Constitution.

Tags: [amendment applications](#), [amendments convention](#), [Article 5](#), [Article V](#), [balanced budget amendment](#), [constitution](#), [constitutional amendment](#), [constitutional convention](#), [constitutional law](#), [convention for proposing amendments](#), [Natelson Rob](#), [Rob Natelson](#)

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