

# The Need for a Convention of the States

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 [americanthinker.com/articles/2015/06/the\\_need\\_for\\_a\\_convention\\_of\\_the\\_states.html](http://americanthinker.com/articles/2015/06/the_need_for_a_convention_of_the_states.html)

Our freedom was won at the cost of blood by men desirous of liberty unconstrained by tyrannical authority, and responding to unacceptable tyranny from a malevolent king.

Once liberty was gained, the choice was made to decentralize power so as to not fall under the will of a single or limited power. Men like Madison, Jefferson, Washington, and others never envisioned that the nation would descend into what it has now become. (One man did: [Alexis De Tocqueville](#).)

The Founding Fathers recognized the experiment embarked upon suffered imperfections, as well as contradictions, such as between liberties and permitting the tyranny of slavery. They had no immediate solution for the latter, but placed into the Constitution wording to allow for modifications, which ultimately resolved the former.

One solution addressing inherent imperfections is [Article Five](#) of the Constitution, which reads in part:

*“The Congress ... on the application of the legislatures of two thirds of the several states, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which, in either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution”*

The call for an Article V Convention has been requested over 350 times, as well as by every state excepting Hawaii. This method played a key role in the 17th Amendment (popular election of Senators) and has been attempted for various individual causes: right to life, a balanced budget, and campaign financing (anti Citizens United).

One call being made today by an organization called “[Convention of the States](#)” is having a high level of success in seeking limitations of federal powers, as originally intended.

Has the nation deteriorated to the point necessitating this action?

To address that question we revert back to the [fears expressed by Tocqueville](#), including; tyranny established by the electorate, led by those who accede to voter demands regardless of the Constitutionality of those demands.

It is worth looking closer at his words:

*“Above (an innumerable crowd of similar and equal men) arises an immense and tutelary power that alone takes charge of assuring their enjoyment and of looking after their fate. It is absolute, detailed, regular, far-sighted and mild. It would resemble paternal power if, like it, it had as a goal to prepare men for manhood; but on the contrary it seeks only to fix them irrevocably in childhood; it likes the citizens to enjoy themselves, provided that they think only about enjoying themselves. It works willingly for their happiness; but it wants to be the unique agent for it and the sole arbiter; it attends to their security, provides for their needs, facilitates their pleasures, conducts their principal affairs, directs their industry, settles their estates, divides their inheritances, how can it not remove entirely from them the trouble to*

| *think and the difficulty of living?"*

For those who ascribe to a theory of a benevolent central authority, such a situation represents the attainment of self-defined 'equality'. It is they that define needs; those under their authority are required to accept limitations upon individual wants for the good of the collective.

Such an 'equality' can only be achieved by force, be it the point of a gun or the force of law, but is that not two sides of the same coin?

The essence of a dominant federal power is to define to the 'innumerable crowd of similar and equal men' that which is sufficient to maintain a level of mediocrity. Success is diminished, accomplishment is downplayed and victimization is raised to new levels with false cries of 'unfairness' being tolerated as well as encouraged.

Mediocrity is not a goal, it is admission of unwillingness to strive to be better.

The men of the Revolutionary War risked their lives and livelihood, supported by their wives and loved ones, did not run such risks to leave for future generations a life ensnared by 'equality' of outcome. They strived so that others might rise above humble beginnings.

Today our nation's leaders have lost sight of this goal, as evidenced by their encouragement of mediocrity. Today we march further toward centralized federal power. Accepting this represents a capitulation as well as defeat of individuality.

Though the roads traveled by our dominant parties may differ, these parties remain fixated on the goal predicted (or feared?) by Tocqueville.

Few amongst us are standing up to this slow march, others are accepting of an unacceptable lowered level.

The Convention of States defines the problem thusly:

*"The federal government has overreached its constitutionally established boundaries and has its hands in almost every area of our lives. Our grandchildren will inherit a bankrupt nation run by an unaccountable bureaucracy"*

To date the COS has 27 states signed on to convene a Constitutional Convention intent on redefining the limitations of the federal government. Legislation for such a convention is pending in 12 other states.

The details of the agenda of such a convention may be subject to change, but the need is not diminished. Currently the focus is on four areas, paraphrasing from the COS website:

- The Spending and Debt Crisis -- The national debt stands at 17 Trillion with no end in sight.
- The Regulatory Crisis -- Excessive federal bureaucracy has placed a complex, conflicted, and crushing regulatory burden upon businesses.
- Congressional Attacks on State Sovereignty -- The federal government's use of grants to control states.
- Federal Takeover of the Decision-Making Process -- The Tenth Amendment seemingly is no longer

in effect, as all true power emanates from Washington.

Already the lines for the next presidential election are being defined. One side is striving to define their ideal of big or bigger government. Reduced dependency is a variable lacking in the equation. The opposition is ill-defined, with a leader yet to emerge. The needs of Americans are ignored as both scramble to pander to the needs of potential future 'Americans'.

We too soon will face a choice to either support our continental drift towards statism or to stand in opposition.

To define the result of capitulation to statist ideals, one must revert back [to Tocqueville](#):

*“after taking each individual by turns in its powerful hands and kneading him as it likes, the sovereign extends its arms over society as a whole; it covers its surface with a network of small, complicated, painstaking, uniform rules through which the most original minds and the most vigorous souls cannot clear a way to surpass the crowd; it does not break wills but it softens them, bends them, and directs them; it rarely forces one to act, but it constantly opposes itself to one's acting; it does not destroy, it prevents things from being born; it does not tyrannize, it hinders, compromises, enervates, extinguishes, dazes, and finally reduces each nation to being nothing more than a herd of timid and industrious animals of which government is the shepherd. . . .”*

It has taken just over 170 years for the words of De Tocqueville to come to pass.

Those that benefit, via the ballot box, from the generosity of the shepherd are granting ever-increasing magnanimity. As generosity increases we cross the threshold from rightfully supporting those in need to wrongfully supplying those who want. The generosity of the shepherd is unlimited, as it extends to donors and companies in the approved businesses.

Those not onboard are punished, either officially or unofficially. Any members of the flock who stray are expelled as social outcasts and pariahs: loss of jobs or government actions against them are becoming more widespread.

Does the Convention of States represent an opportunity to change this direction? That answer of course is defined in the question, with 'opportunity' being the operative word. It is an opportunity, but the success cannot be determined minus the effort made in implementation of said changes.

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