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Fact Sheet:

Constitutional Convention

Article V of the U.S. Constitution gives two prescriptions for how to make constitutional amendments.



1. Congress proposes amendments and the states ratify them.
2. After the legislatures of two-thirds of the states pass resolutions of application, Congress calls a constitutional convention to propose amendments and the states ratify them.

A convention under Article V has never happened, but many states have passed resolutions trying to do so over the years. The only real constitutional convention in America took place in 1787. A convention today surely wouldn't feature the likes of George Washington and Alexander Hamilton.

Proponents claim a convention can be limited to one topic, but that is false. U.S. Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg said "Any claim that the Congress could, by statute, limit a convention's agenda is pure speculation, and any attempt to limit the agenda would almost certainly be unenforceable."

Proponents claim a convention could stop overreaching federal judiciary, but nobody honestly believes the Supreme Court will not be involved in a convention. Somebody will sue somebody and the Supreme Court will choose how the convention will be decided.

Constitutional Convention Defined:
According to Black's Law Dictionary, "a duly constituted assembly... for the purpose of framing, revising, or amending its constitution."

By this widely accepted definition, a so-called "Convention of States" is a constitutional convention.

"A Constitutional Convention today would be a free-for-all for special interest groups, television coverage, and press speculation."

Chief Justice Warren Burger



"I certainly would not want a Constitutional Convention. I mean whoa. Who knows what would come out of that?"

Justice Antonin Scalia