

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2021 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Joint Resolution 7 (Senators Pinsky and Kramer)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

United States Constitution - Amendments Convention - Democracy Amendment

This joint resolution applies to the U.S. Congress for an amendments convention to be called for the purpose of proposing an amendment (or amendments) to the U.S. Constitution (1) affirming every individual citizen's right to vote; (2) reserving constitutional rights to natural persons; and/or (3) authorizing the regulation of contributions and expenditures intended to influence elections.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The joint resolution does not directly affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The joint resolution applies to the U.S. Congress for an amendments convention to be called, pursuant to Article V of the U.S. Constitution, as soon as two-thirds of the states have applied for a convention, for the purpose of proposing an amendment or amendments to the U.S. Constitution regarding any of the specific and limited purposes of (1) affirming every individual citizen's right to vote; (2) reserving constitutional rights to natural persons; or (3) authorizing the regulation of contributions and expenditures intended to influence elections.

Delegates to the convention from Maryland may not propose or support amendments that do not have the primary goals of addressing only the specific and limited purposes stated

above. The application constitutes a continuing application and expires January 20, 2030. The resolution must be sent to the Presiding Officers of both houses of the legislature of each of the states with the request that it be circulated among Legislative Branch leaders and that each of the states join in requesting the U.S. Congress to call a convention to initiate a proposal to amend the U.S. Constitution as described in the joint resolution.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: SJ 2 of 2020 received a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken. Its cross file, HJ 10, received a hearing in the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee, but no further action was taken. SJ 1 of 2019 received an unfavorable report from the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Its cross file, HJ 2, received a hearing in the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee but was subsequently withdrawn. In addition, similar joint resolutions were introduced in the 2014 through 2018 sessions.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 17, 2021
rh/hlb

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