

AUTHORITATIVE SOURCES ON A LIMITED ARTICLE V CONVENTION

FEBRUARY 18, 2019

Can an Article V convention be limited to one topic? Because having factual information is so critical to democratic decision-making, arguments in favor of or opposed to such a convention should be based on peer-reviewed articles and major institutional and governmental reports:

SOURCE & DATE	STATEMENT
American Bar Association, 1973	“. . . we believe that a substantively-limited Article V convention is consistent with the purpose of the alternative method since the states and people would have a complete vehicle other than the Congress for remedying specific abuses of power by the national government ”
US Department of Justice, 1987	“The paper concludes that Article V permits the states to apply for, and the Congress to call, a constitutional convention for limited purposes, and that a variety of practical means to enforce such limitations are available.”
Congressional Research Service, 2016	"Clearly intended by the framers as a balance to proposal of amendments by Congress, it was included to provide the people, through applications by their state legislatures, with the means to call a convention having the authority to consider and propose changes to the Constitution, particularly if Congress proved incapable of, or unwilling to, initiate amendments on its own."
Marquette Law Review, Prof. Ronald Rotunda, 1996	"Given the numerous safeguards built into the convention method of amending the Constitution under Article V, fears regarding the use of this method are unfounded. In fact, the convention method provides greater protection than the Congressional method. The convention method, favored by people such as President Lincoln, is subject to many constraints, but Congress may propose an amendment to the states at any time with no limits on the subject matter of those amendments."
Harvard, Prof. Laurence Tribe, 2011	"I would also object very much to someone who says that because I don't know the answers to all of the questions about an Article V convention, I would be opposed to ever having one, and that's why I've made very clear that I don't take that view."
Rep. Jamie Raskin, 2019	"...Senate Joint Resolution 1...not only specifically limits the scope of the called-for Convention to campaign finance law but forbids Maryland's delegates to support any Amendment proposed <i>outside</i> this purview in the event there were to be a renegade move to promote one."
First Report by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Citizens Commission Concerning a Constitutional Amendment for Government of the People December 31, 2019	"After significant review of a broad collection of materials, the Commission supports the approach for a limited-purpose convention under Article V. The intent is to either propose the amendment or to force the issue in Congress. In the final report, the Commission intends to outline this option and make direct recommendations to the Commonwealth on how it might proactively accelerate this initiative, but in the meantime, the Commission is supportive of any efforts in the Legislature, or the Commonwealth more broadly."