



## **SEIU MARYLAND & DC STATE COUNCIL**

### **Testimony in OPPOSITION to HJ 10**

#### ***United States Constitution -Amendments Convention***

#### **House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee**

**March 2, 2020, 2:00 PM**

Submitted by Terrence Cavanagh, Executive Director

Service Employees International Union, Maryland & DC State Council, urges you to oppose HJ 10, also known as an Article V Convention of the US Constitution.

With over two million members, the SEIU is the largest union in North America. We are focused on uniting workers in the sectors health care, public services, and property services to improve lives and the services we provide. We represent over 45,000 workers in Maryland and Washington, DC.

The advocates of HJ 10 say that this is the best course to take to change the Constitution to protect against the unlimited corporate campaign contributions that are threatening our democracy that the United States Supreme Court allowed in the *Citizens United* decision. They may also say that the threat of a Constitutional Convention is the best way to get Congress to pass an amendment limiting campaign contributions.

We respectfully disagree. The only precedent for a Constitutional Convention was the one that rewrote the Articles of Confederation in 1787 in Philadelphia. Once the delegates to that convention gathered, there was no restriction on what changes they could make. We believe there is a significant risk of a new convention doing likewise – although with results that may not be as fruitful. Who is to limit what delegates to a convention may do?

We believe Citizens United, a 5-4 decision, was badly decided and should be overturned. Although our union has spent very significant sums on campaigns over the years, we have supported public financing of campaigns and will continue to push for more.

We support public financing of federal elections. We believe that is a more practical approach to the issue of concern, without the risks associated with a constitutional convention.

We ask you to give a **unfavorable** report to **HJ 10**.

Thank you.

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