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**United States Constitution –
Amendments Convention Limitations on Federal Powers
Rules and Executive Nominations
March 3, 2023
Unfavorable**

The American Council of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) ask for an unfavorable report on HJ2.

The threat of calling a constitutional convention is more real than ever before. Article V convention proponents appear to be dangerously close to calling a constitutional convention to enact a balanced budget amendment, opening the constitution to a wide range of harmful changes. This would be the first constitutional convention since the original convention took place in 1787. We must prevent this development from occurring and putting all of our constitutional rights and protections up for grabs. the Maryland legislature has already taken steps to rescind its calls for an Article V convention.

Under Article V of the U.S. Constitution, a convention can be called when two-thirds of the state’s petition for a convention to enact amendments to the constitution. States can also rescind their calls by voting to rescind in the state legislature, like Maryland did. Article V proponents claim that 28 states now have active applications to call an Article V convention specifically to enact a balanced budget amendment.

An Article V convention is a dangerous threat to the U.S. Constitution, our democracy, and our civil rights and liberties. There is no language in the U.S. Constitution to limit a convention to one issue and it is widely understood that a convention once called will be able to consider any amendments to the constitution that the delegates want to consider. There are also no guidelines or rules to govern a convention. Due to the lack of provisions in the constitution and lack of historical precedent, it is unknown how delegates to a convention would be picked, what rules would be in place, what would happen in the case of legal disputes, what issues would be raised, how the American people would be represented, and how to limit the influence of special interests in a convention. Because there is no way to limit a convention’s focus, any constitutional issue could be brought up, including marriage equality, civil rights and civil liberties, voting rights, privacy rights, among others.

The Maryland legislature can continue help stop this dangerous threat to our constitutional rights and protections from taking place. For these reasons, we ask for an unfavorable report on HJ2.

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

TEL (202) 429-1000 FAX (202) 429-1293 TDD (202) 659-0446 WEB www.afscme.org 1625 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036-5687