

# **2025 Testimony SB 886 - Thompson - FAVORABLE.pdf**

Uploaded by: Chuck Thompson

Position: FAV

**Senate Bill 886 – Support**

**Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment  
“Amendments Convention Called Under Article V of the U.S. Constitution - Delegation to the  
Convention”  
Hearing date 2/26/25**

Chair and committee members.

To recap, SB 886 establishes a process for the Maryland General Assembly to select and instruct commissioners to attend an Article V Convention of States. At this Convention, the commissioners will deliberate on proposed amendments to the U.S. Constitution. Please note, this Bill is not a specific call for an Article V application.

To date, 16 States have passed similar Bills, and in 2025 efforts are underway in 13 other States.

There are numerous Article V applications underway that will prompt a Convention. When applications are aggregated from 34 States a Convention of States will be called.

Many organizations are lobbying States to call for an Article V Convention. Here’s a summary of current applications being monitored by the Pheonix Correspondence Commission (see attached):

- 27 States have called for an Article V Convention to draft an amendment for a Balanced Budget
- 19 States have called for an Article V Convention to draft amendments for Fiscal Restraints, Term Limits, and Federal Government Overreach
- 7 States have called for an Article V Convention to draft an amendment for U.S. Term Limits
- 3 States have called for an Article V Convention to draft an amendment for Free and Fair Elections

The Maryland General Assembly has previously introduced Bills to call for a Convention of States. Between 2015-2021 there were eight Senate Bills drafted to submit Article V applications related to Democracy and Congressional Term Limits. Some contained commissioner guidance which has been utilized to develop the contents for this standalone Bill.

In conclusion, there is an increasing awareness of waste, fraud, and abuse taking place throughout the Federal Government. Across the nation, Article V applications are being proposed to address these issues. This Bill establishes a process to select and instruct commissioners to represent Maryland in any Article V Convention of States that is called.

Please return a **FAVORABLE** report for SB 886.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Chuck Thompson  
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Pasadena, MD 21122

# ARTICLE V CONVENTION LEGISLATIVE PROGRESS REPORT

<u>Active</u> <u>AVC Groups</u>	<u>States</u> <u>Passed</u>	<u>States Introduced</u> <i>(includes carryovers from 2023)</i>	<u>House</u> <u>Committees</u>	<u>House</u> <u>Chamber</u>	<u>Senate</u> <u>Committees</u>	<u>Senate</u> <u>Chamber</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Score*</u>	<u>%</u> <u>Complete</u>
<b>CSNDS/ BBA Task Force</b>	27: AL AZ AK AR GA FL <i>(updated 2024)</i> IN IA KS LA MS MI MO NE NH NC ND OH OK PA SD TN TX UT WV WI WY	1 Active: SC  DNP: ID ME	Passed:  DNP:	Passed:  DNP:	Passed:  DNP:	Passed:  DNP: ~	<b>163</b>	<b>80%</b>
<b>Convention of States Project</b>	19: AL AK AR AZ GA FL IN LA MS MO NE ND OK SC TN TX UT WV WI	10 Active: HA IL KY MA MN NJ NY NC OH PA Update: NE DNP: DE ID IA KS ME RI SD VT WA WY	Passed: IA KS NC  DNP: RI	Passed: NC  DNP: KS	Passed: IA KS  DNP: DE SD	Passed:  DNP: KS WY	<b>126</b>	<b>61%</b>
<b>US Term Limits</b>	7: OK (2023) AL GA FL <i>(updated 2024)</i> , MO WV WI	9 Active: KY LA MN NE NC OH PA SC TN  DNP: GA <i>(update)</i> ID IN KS ME SD UT	Passed: IN KS NC TN  DNP:	Passed: IN NC TN  DNP: KS	Passed: KA  DNP: IN SD	Passed:  DNP:	<b>55</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>WolfPAC Free &amp; Fair Elections</b>	3: CA RI VT	2 Active: MA NH  DNP: OR WA	Passed:  DNP:	Passed:  DNP:	Passed:  DNP:	Passed:  DNP:	<b>20</b>	<b>10%</b>

<b>Delegate Selection Bills</b>	16: AZ AK AR GA FL IN LA MO~ ND OK (2023) SD TN TX UT WI WY	8 Active: AZ KA MD MO(2d) NE NC SC VA  DNP: IA MS	Passed: KA OK NC  DNP:	Passed: OK NC  DNP:	Passed: OK MO VA  DNP:	Passed: OK  DNP:		
<b>Rescission Efforts since 2014</b>	9: OR (2023) CO IL NJ MD NM NV TX~ DE	5 Active: AZ CT NH NY-SC  DNP:	Passed: NH  DNP:	Passed: NH  DNP:	Passed: NY  DNP:	Passed: NY  DNP:		

\*Each group receives 1 point for each state into which an Article V resolution is introduced; 1 point in each chamber if it passes all committees (2 pts in unicameral NE); 1 point in each chamber when it passes the floor (2 pts - NE); and 1 point when application is final. Thus, 6 total points can be earned in each state. The completion goal is 204 points (34 states x 6 pts./state). If an application dies during a non-carryover legislative session, then points generated for that cycle are not counted. DNP = voted down, tabled, died, missed crossover, held on calendar, or otherwise did not progress, but in some cases subject to be resurrected. ~ = further explanation required. Scoring is based on available public information and may have some inaccuracies. **Open/plenary convention calls are not aggregated herein; differing applications of aggregation will result in higher passage numbers than reflected herein.**



# **Written Testimony SB0886 - Amending Convention.pdf**

Uploaded by: Julie Holly

Position: FAV

SB0886

I am writing in support of **Senate Bill 0886: Amendments Convention Called Under Article V of the U.S. Constitution –2**

Many concerns have been voiced regarding an Article V Convention. All are addressed in this Bill such as:

- Clarifies the process for designating Commissioners to participate
- Offers a process for insuring Commissioners comply with required guidelines
- Ensures the original Constitution will not be altered
- Insures confidentiality of discussions/debates
- Provides for robust debate ensuring concerns of all states are addressed in the areas of:
  - **Government overreach**
  - **Out of Control spending**
  - **Limits on terms of service** to preserve integrity and competency of all government representatives
- Includes an advisory committee to oversee and advise on proceedings

The state of the Federal government is atrocious and although many issues are currently being addressed, the next Administration can wipe out any progress made with the stroke of a pen. No matter what side of the aisle we are politically, we all want and deserve peace, prosperity and freedom. Our Founding Fathers anticipated a future need to amend the Constitution. Now is that time. I ask that you all work together to honor their vision and to insure the future of our government.

Thank you for your consideration. And thank you for your service.

Julie Holly, District 4

# **SB886COSDelegation.pdf**

Uploaded by: Justin Ready

Position: FAV

JUSTIN READY  
Legislative District 5  
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MINORITY WHIP

Finance Committee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 26, 2025

**SB 886 – Amendments Convention Called Under Article V of the U.S. Constitution –  
Delegation to the Convention**

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

This resolution is being presented to offer a process to appoint a delegation to an amendments convention called under Article V of the U.S. Constitution.

An amendments convention will be called when 2/3s of the state legislatures (34) pass resolutions applying for a convention to propose amendments on the same topic (which serves as the meeting agenda). Each state chooses and instructs its delegation of commissioners, who attend the meeting and work with the other state delegations to hammer out possible **amendment proposals** on the topic(s) specified in the 34 state applications. Because they act as agents of their state legislatures, the commissioners only have legal authority to act pursuant to that specified agenda, and only to act in pursuance of their legislature's instructions. Every state gets one vote.

Any proposals that are supported by a majority of the states at the convention then get submitted back to the states for ratification. Only when 38 states ratify a proposal can it become part of our Constitution.

To be clear, passing SB 886 does not include Maryland with the 19 other states who have passed a resolution calling for an amendment convention. However, it will prepare Maryland for when the time comes with a specific process of how our state will be represented.

I respectfully ask for a favorable report on SB 886.

## **SB 886**

Uploaded by: Maria M. Bedard

Position: FAV



**Honorable Chairman Brian J. Feldman, Education, Energy and the Environment Committee**

**Subject: Senate Bill 0886**

**Amendments Convention Called Under Article V of the U.S. Constitution - Delegation to the Convention**

My name is Maria Bedard. I am the COS Action Maryland State Director.

COS is pro-good government and decidedly non-partisan.

We believe that state legislatures and local governments are best suited and most appropriate to meet the needs and desires of their citizens. With over 33,000 supporters in Maryland and 2 ½ million supporters from every belief, race, gender, and political party, and these numbers are increasing by the day.

Nationwide, COS represents ordinary citizens who feel disenfranchised from the daily workings of our nation's Capital. They tell us they feel discouraged by the bureaucratic enigma of a federal government that continues to grow with thousands of departments, agencies, and bureaus.

The Constitution recognizes that leaders are imperfect. Article V was written for the time when citizens, through their state legislatures, would inevitably choose to take a 'time-out' and get things back on track using Article V.

To date, 27 amendments have been proposed, debated, and legally ratified through Congress using Article V of the Constitution, which requires approval by three-fourths or 34 of the states.

Like you, we recognize the concerns that a convention could "run away" without proper ground rules. Our Delegates to the Convention Legislation (SB0886) assuages those concerns. We're here today to help you prepare for the eventual Article V convention. Maryland must be prepared.

**Regardless of whether Maryland passes any Article V legislation - and there are a variety of proposals out there - Maryland should be prepared to participate in a convention when it is called.** Over the years, you have asked us for clarity regarding a convention, and COS is responding nationally with a new legislative framework to address those voices directly.

In past years, I have consistently advocated for the adoption of an Article V Convention of States resolution in Maryland. Such a resolution, upon passage, would align our state with the 19 others calling for a convention aimed at deliberating and proposing amendments to institute term limits, fiscal restraints, and curtail the jurisdiction of the Federal government.

There are four steps to the Convention of States process:

1) pass the resolution

- 2) determine the rules
- 3) select Commissioners
- 4) and participate in the Convention.

In Maryland, while we continue advocating for step one, **our primary focus in 2025 is step two... The Rules as proposed in SB0886.**

People naturally have a fear of the unknown. Supporters and opponents of a convention of states both have questions about the rules that would be put in place BEFORE the actual Convention. There are a lot of “what if?” questions. Our leadership team helped draft this bill to answer those questions.

Recognizing the legitimate concerns expressed by members of this General Assembly regarding the feasibility and oversight of such a convention, our COS Action Maryland supporters take these concerns seriously.

Hence, we wholeheartedly support SB0889, which establishes crucial standards for the selection, instruction, and supervision of commissioners to represent Maryland at an Article V Convention of States. The bill outlines definitions, qualifications, selection procedures, removal, protocols, and safeguards against potential misuse for Maryland's representatives at an Article V Convention.

SB0886 defines Maryland's "rules of engagement" for a convention. Here are several important processes outlined in this bill:

- Establishes an oversight committee in the General Assembly; ensuring those commissioners are beholden to you, the General Assembly, and not under the influence of special interest
- Defines the commissioner selection process and their personal qualifications
- Specifies the number of commissioners that would make up Maryland’s delegation
- Describes how the General Assembly holds those individuals accountable to the will of the state, and provisions a recall process for them
- Ensures the bill of rights and civil rights amendments are off limits to any changes.
- Defines how the commissioners organize at the convention, such as how they select a chairperson and how they vote.

We have boundaries and accountability in place so there is the ability to recall a rogue commissioner and resolve any other problems. **Passing the Delegation to the Convention Bill, we remove the fear of the unknown and engage in a productive discussion. This will provide a clear context for moving forward.**

This bill is vital to be prepared for the inevitable. Whether Maryland itself holds Article V applications or not, once 34 states agree to meet, all 50 states will be invited. At this point,

it's not IF the resolution will be passed, it is question of WHEN. And when this does happen, I want to be proud that our state is ready to solve the problems that Congress will not.

By preparing Maryland for an Article V Convention, we equip ourselves to participate meaningfully in shaping our nation's future. Even if such a convention is not immediately convened, the responsibility remains for you to appoint commissioners to represent Maryland should the occasion arise.

A Convention of States will convene in our lifetime. As State Senators, YOU can lead the country in passing legislation to set the ground rules for how Maryland will participate in an Article V Convention of States.

I urge you to support the full passage of this bill. Thank you and we appreciate your time and your service to the people of Maryland.

**Maria M. Bedard**  
**[mariamoungelisbedard@pm.me](mailto:mariamoungelisbedard@pm.me)**  
**240.447.3648**

## **2025 Taylor SB 886 Favorable.pdf**

Uploaded by: Sallie Taylor

Position: FAV

February 24, 2025

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chair  
The Honorable Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice-Chair  
Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
2 West Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SB 886, Amendments Convention Called Under Article V of  
the U.S. Constitution - Delegation to the Convention

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan and Members:

I support SB 886, Amendments Convention Called Under Article V of the U.S. Constitution – Delegation to the Convention. When this bill was considered last year, our federal public debt was \$34 trillion; today it is over \$36.5 trillion. This a national crisis.

Now more than ever, we need swift action to tackle our debt crisis. As more state legislatures are seeing the wisdom of calling for an Article V convention to consider constitutional amendments that would limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government, impose fiscal restraints, and place term limits on federal officials, Maryland should be prepared to not only send a delegation but to give them the guidance that will be required to make decisions in the best interest of our country.

This is one fiscally responsible vote that costs so very little but is vital to our country's future. Clearly, doing nothing is no longer an option. I would urge a favorable report on SB 886.

Sincerely,

Sallie B. Taylor

1260 Guilford Road  
Eldersburg, Maryland  
21784

## **SB886 FAV - Lipko.pdf**

Uploaded by: Seth Lipko

Position: FAV

Written Testimony for SB0886: FAVORABLE  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee, 2/26/2025

Seth Lipko  
1121 Nottingham Dr  
Glen Burnie, MD 21061

Chair and Committee members:

I would like to submit to you my favorable report on SB886, which is, simply put, a procedural definition for Maryland, should an Article V Convention of States ever be called. It is not an application to any one particular effort to call an Article V convention. It is just the rules that surround such an event.

For some background, Article V of the US Constitution defines the method of amending itself. Article V provides two methods for proposing amendments: Congress, and the states. For the state-sourced method, first, State Legislators submit an Article V application to the U.S. Congress. The application defines one or more topics to be discussed at a Convention of States. Once 34 States pass the same Article V application, a Convention of States is called. Each state will participate by sending commissioners to represent its interests, regardless if whether they are one of the 34 states that applied or not.

At this Convention of States, topics within the text of the application are discussed, not unlike a special legislative session within a state (such as the redistricting session called here a few years ago). Amendments are drafted and then voted on by the commissioners, with each state holding a single vote. All draft amendments that receive a majority of, or 26, favorable reports are sent to the States to be ratified. Only after 3/4ths of the states, or 38, vote to ratify amendments do they become part of our nation's Constitution.

SB866 does NOT add Maryland to any of the growing list(s) of states calling for an Article V Amendments Convention. SB866 aims to prepare the General Assembly of Maryland for an Article V convention, and it applies to any Article V conventions that would ever be called. Here is an itemized summary of what is contained in the bill:

- It starts by defining how many commissioners would represent Maryland, and provides some qualifications, to ensure no special interest groups can infiltrate the delegation.
- It contains the oath that each commissioner must bind themselves to.
- It defines the commissioner's roles, responsibilities, and instructions at the convention.
- It provisions a bicameral oversight committee, with the ability to recall any errant commissioners.
- It limits gift contributions to commissioners, to prevent corruption.
- It also binds the commissioners to the subject matter of the application of the convention, preventing any potential "runaway" topics from being entertained, and also explicitly keeps the Civil Rights amendments safe from any alterations.

There are over 33,000 Marylanders who support calling a convention of states to enact some of the structural reform that is necessary for building a more perfect union. They understand that we should have guidelines in place before we convene, especially if Maryland is not required to have an active application to be able to participate, once 34 other states agree on a topic. It is prudent to do this now, as several topics have made significant strides in reaching that 34-state threshold to call a convention. A research group, [the Phoenix Correspondence Commission](#), shows that two separate efforts have 27 and 19 states with applications. An article V convention could happen, and very soon!

The reason states are pursuing this solution is because of how dynamic the federal government has become. The pendulum swings wildly from administration to administration, getting more extreme each time. We don't have to go back very long at all to find examples of how the actions that the U.S. Government takes directly impact Maryland residents. Even more so recently, the actions that the U.S. Government takes directly impact you, the state legislature! Other states see the need for this solution to be employed and are passing similar bills to this one. Maryland may never apply to an Article V convention, but when a convention inevitably occurs, we need to be prepared to answer the call. This bill provides that preparation. Please report favorably on SB886 and pass it to the floor for full discussion and a vote.

Thank you,  
Seth Lipko



# **SB886-AFSCME Council 3-UNFAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Cindy Smalls

Position: UNF



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Patrick Moran – President

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**SB886- Amendments Convention Called Under Article V of the U.S. Constitution –  
Delegation to the Convention**

**Education, Energy & Environment Committee  
February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**Opposition**

Thank you, Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and members of the Education and Energy & Environment Committee for the opportunity for AFSCME and I am here on behalf of AFSCME Council 3 to express our strong opposition to Senate Bill 886. As a union representing a diverse group of public sector workers across Maryland, we believe that this bill poses significant risks to the rights and protections of workers and undermines the standards we have fought hard to achieve.

The United States Constitution has long been the foundation of American democracy, ensuring a system of checks and balances, protecting individual rights, and providing a framework for governance. However, recent calls for a Constitutional Convention under Article V raise concerns about the potential risks to our democracy. While Article V allows states to propose amendments, a Constitutional Convention could lead to significant, unpredictable changes that may undermine the core principles of the Constitution.

One major danger is the uncertainty of the process. Once a convention is called, there are no restrictions on what can be debated or amended. Proponents may argue for narrow amendments like term limits, but there is no guarantee that such goals would be adhered to. Instead, a convention could result in sweeping changes that alter the structure of the federal government or erode civil rights protections.

Another concern is the potential influence of special interest groups and wealthy donors. With money playing a large role in politics, powerful groups could dominate the process, pushing for amendments that align with their interests, often at the expense of the general public. This could lead to constitutional changes that favor the wealthy and powerful, deepening inequality in the U.S.

The risk to civil rights is particularly alarming. There have been calls to use a Constitutional Convention to propose amendments that could undermine voting rights, weaken civil rights protections, or erode the separation of church and state. This poses a threat to the freedoms that have safeguarded American democracy, such as freedom of speech and equal protection under the law.

The U.S. Constitution has been amended only 27 times over more than 200 years, reflecting a careful, deliberate process for change. A Constitutional Convention could disrupt this balance and result in irreversible amendments that alter the government's structure or strip away critical protections. Once changes are made, they would be difficult to undo, leaving future generations to deal with poorly considered decisions.

While some may see a Constitutional Convention as a way to address flaws in the system, the risks far outweigh the benefits. The uncertainty of the outcome, potential special interest influence, and the threat to civil rights make an Article V Convention a dangerous proposition. Instead, we should focus on addressing issues through existing processes that allow for thoughtful debate, public input, and accountability.

In conclusion, a Constitutional Convention under Article V presents significant dangers to American democracy. It could open the door to unpredictable changes, be manipulated by special interests, and threaten our fundamental rights. For the sake of our democracy, we must reject calls for a Constitutional Convention and work within the existing framework to address today's challenges.

For these reasons, we urge an unfavorable report on SB886.

## **SB 886 - Amendments Convention Called Under Article**

Uploaded by: Joanne Antoine

Position: UNF

February 26, 2025

**Testimony on SB 886**  
**Amendments Convention Called Under Article V of the U.S. Constitution – Delegation to the**  
**Convention**  
**Education, Energy, and the Environment**

**Position: Unfavorable**

Common Cause Maryland opposes SB 886, which would establish a process for appointing a delegation to an Article V Constitutional Convention, a process that could rewrite any constitutional rights or protections currently available to American citizens.

We are strongly opposed to any effort in support of calling for a constitutional convention, which would put at risk the constitutional rights and protections of all Americans. The Constitution provides that Congress “on the Application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several states, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments.” Regardless of any limits that are being placed in the state calls for a constitutional convention, it is widely believed that once a convention is called there is no way to limit the constitutional amendments that the convention can consider and on which they can act.

Several constitutional scholars, including both Former Supreme Court Chief Justice Warren Burger and the late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, have weighed in on the perils of a constitutional convention. There are no rules on what would happen if and when a convention is called: no rules on how delegates are chosen, how voting occurs at the convention, how money can be spent to choose and influence delegates, or how the convention would operate.

This means that any existing constitutional right and protection could be up for consideration and revision by a convention. This includes constitutional protections for civil rights, civil liberties, voting rights, freedom of religion, freedom of speech and privacy, among others. The role of the courts in protecting the constitutional rights of individuals and minority interests would also be up for consideration and revision.

A constitutional convention would put at risk the constitution our Founding Fathers created and the constitutional rights and protections that exist today.

We strongly urge an unfavorable report on SB 886.

## **2-26-25 SB 886 Amendments Convention Called Under**

Uploaded by: Nancy Soreng

Position: UNF



## **TESTIMONY TO SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **SB 886 Amendments Convention Called Under Article V of the U.S. Constitution - Delegation to the Convention**

**POSITION: Oppose**

**BY: Linda Kohn, President**

**Date: February 26, 2025**

The League of Women Voters has consistently opposed calls by states for convening an Article V convention for the reasons outlined below. This legislation does nothing to address the dangers of calling for a constitutional convention.

After two years of study and consensus about amending the constitution, in 2016 the following position was announced: "The League of Women Voters is concerned that there are many unresolved questions about the powers and processes of an Article V Constitutional Convention."

The League believes that such a convention should be called only if the following conditions are in place:

- The Constitutional Convention must be transparent and not conducted in secret.
- The public has a right to know what is being debated and voted on.
- Representation at the Constitutional Convention must be based on population rather than one state, one vote, and delegates should be elected rather than appointed. The delegates represent citizens, should be elected by them, and must be distributed by U.S. population.
- Voting at the Constitutional Convention must be by delegate, not by state.
- Delegates from one state can have varying views and should be able to express them by individual votes.
- The Constitutional Convention must be limited to a specific topic. It is important to guard against a "runaway convention" which considers multiple issues or topics that were not initiated by the states.
- Only state resolutions on a single topic count when determining if a Constitutional Convention should be called. Counting state requests by topic ensures that there is sufficient interest in a particular subject to call a Convention and enhances citizen interest and participation in the process. The validity of state calls for an Article V Constitutional Convention must be determined by the most recent action of the state.
- If a state has enacted a rescission of its call, that rescission must be respected by Congress.

*However, Congress has taken no action to make sure that any of the safeguards outlined above are in or will be in place. Until then, we oppose any effort on the part of states to call for an Article V Constitutional Convention.*

**SB 886 is an ineffectual device to give the appearance of progress on establishing protocols for an Article V Constitutional Convention and we urge an unfavorable report.**

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