

Written Testimony in Support of HB 925

Submitted to the Maryland House of Delegates Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations. Hearing on March 3, 2025

Submitted By A. Stephen Patten, Resident of Maryland District 42C

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I reside in District 42C, and I submit this testimony in strong support of HB 925, a bill that ensures **Maryland is prepared for an Article V Convention when convened.**

There are multiple Article V resolutions currently active nationwide, with significant momentum toward reaching the required 34-state threshold to call a convention. According to research from the [Phoenix Correspondence Commission](#), two separate efforts currently have 27 and 19 states with active applications, making the possibility of a convention increasingly likely. When the 34-state threshold occurs, Maryland will have a role to play, regardless of whether our state passes an Article V Convention application. HB 925 ensures that Maryland is prepared.

It is important to emphasize what an Article V Convention entails. Just as a state legislature convenes a special session for a specific purpose—such as Maryland’s redistricting session in recent years—an Article V Convention operates within the scope of its calling resolution. Commissioners from each state gather to discuss the topics outlined in the application, draft proposed amendments, and then vote, with each state casting a single vote. Any amendment that receives majority approval—26 states—advances to the states for ratification. However, only after three-fourths of the states—38—vote to ratify does an amendment become part of the U.S. Constitution.

HB 925 does **NOT** add Maryland to the growing list of states calling for an Article V Convention. Instead, it provides a structured framework to guide Maryland’s participation in any convention that is called, ensuring **Maryland’s commissioners act with clear direction and accountability.** The bill contains several key provisions:

- **Defines the number of commissioners representing Maryland** and establishes qualifications to prevent undue influence from special interest groups.
- **Mandates an oath for all commissioners**, binding them to their responsibilities.
- **Outlines the roles, responsibilities, and instructions** for Maryland’s delegation.
- **Establishes a bicameral oversight committee** with the authority to recall any commissioner who fails to adhere to their duties.
- **Restricts gift contributions** to commissioners to safeguard against corruption.

- **Limits the scope of discussion to the subject matter of the convention's application**, preventing any so-called "runaway" convention scenarios.
- **Explicitly protects the Civil Rights amendments** from any potential alteration.

The Maryland General Assembly will ultimately select and oversee our commissioners to an Article V convention. The best time to establish guidelines for Maryland's delegation is before a convention is called, not after.

HB 925 is a proactive measure that ensures Maryland leads with responsibility, accountability, and foresight. It guarantees that our state's role in any Article V Convention—when it occurs—is conducted with integrity and within a clear constitutional framework. I urge this committee to pass HB 925 and ensure Maryland is ready for the future.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A. Stephen Patten

Resident, District 42C