

Written Testimony – SUPPORT SB 517

Bill: SB 517

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Position: Favorable

Chairman, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Steve Patten, and I am a resident of District 42C. I respectfully submit this testimony in support of SB 517.

In past years, discussions before this body have centered on whether Maryland should apply for an Article V Convention. SB 517 addresses a separate and necessary responsibility: **how Maryland will structure, guide, and hold accountable the commissioners it appoints when an Article V Convention is convened under the United States Constitution.**

Article V provides that when two-thirds of the states apply, Congress shall call a Convention for proposing amendments. When that constitutional threshold is reached, Maryland—like every other state—will appoint commissioners. That responsibility will fall to the General Assembly.

Concerns are often raised that an Article V Convention would lack procedures or safeguards. SB 517 directly addresses those concerns.

This legislation establishes:

- Clear qualifications for commissioners
- A defined appointment process
- Specific limits on authority
- Binding subject-matter constraints
- Reporting and transparency requirements
- Compensation standards
- And a removal mechanism if a commissioner exceeds the authority granted

In short, SB 517 ensures that Maryland retains full legislative control over its delegation.

This bill **does not** call a Convention.

It **does not** expand its scope.

It **does not** endorse any particular amendment.

It establishes guardrails.

Preparation is not partisanship—it is stewardship. When a Convention is convened, Maryland should participate with clarity, discipline, and accountability—not uncertainty.

SB 517 affirms the General Assembly's authority, protects Maryland's voice, and ensures our state is prepared to act responsibly within the constitutional framework provided in Article V.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on SB 517.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Patten
Hampstead, Maryland
District 42C