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SB517- Amendments Convention Called Under Article V of the U.S. Constitution – Delegation to the Convention
Education, Energy & Environment Committee
February 25th, 2026
Unfavorable

Thank you, Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and members of the Education and Energy & Environment Committee for the opportunity for AFSCME Council 3 to express our strong opposition to HB925. 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

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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 SB517.

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