

TESTIMONY OF MARLENE JOHNSON
ON HJR 2
132nd GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF OHIO 2017-18

Chairman Roegner, Vice Chair Lipps, Ranking Member Leland and members of the Federalism Interstate Relations Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present arguments against HJR 2- the joint resolution calling for an Article V Constitutional Convention of the States.

My Background

I'm an emeritus member of our Greene County Republican Party and a founding member of the Greene County Prayer Coalition. I am 80 years and 9 months old- When you get older it becomes a bragging point and I'm not above using the "Age Card." It's hard enough to get to Columbus, find a parking space and get to a location in our State House when you are younger and can walk without a hobbling. I have 4 great-grandchildren and have supposedly retired from all this political nonsense. However, as I see it, this business of calling for an Article V Constitutional Amendment is the most serious and pressing issue before our General Assembly. From various sources, I'm told that 30 of the required 34 States have voted for the Convention of States, which makes Ohio that much more critical. If we lose our Constitution, it's "Game Over" and we may as well all go home.

My Concerns

I am not a constitutional expert. I am in awe of the people who are testifying today. I am an activist, a Deplorable pragmatist who became politically active after Hearing Vice-President Al Gore speak at an MIT graduation in 1999 when he was running for President. Clinton was Clinton, but Gore had an agenda and if he became President, we were going to be reprocessed "Big Time." I graduated from High School in 1954. We had a huge picture of George Washington, a copy of the Ten Commandments and a framed copy of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution on the walls of our Assembly Room. The Principle taught our Civics class which included a one day trip to the Indiana Legislature. On our Senior Trip to DC, we visited the Smithsonian and saw the originals of our Founding Documents and we were all much impressed.

Because I'm active and a pro-signature collector for the Marriage Amendment, the Removal of the Ohio Inheritance Tax, the Health Care Amendment and the Workplace Freedom Amendment, I attend all possible meetings for potential signatures- so I have heard these people speak multiple times as well as the proponents of the Convention of States. The point being, it's been years since our schools have taught Civics. It's been the decision of the Education Elite that there is not enough time to include the "Old Dead White Men." Whatever is covered is from the "New Deal" forward, with an emphasis on the need for apologies for multiple misdeeds of our nation- reduced patriotism and emphasis on globalism.

Point being- most of you on the committee are in your 40's-50's, graduating in '84 or '94. Even though you swore to uphold the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of Ohio, you've had no Teaching regarding either document. And don't mention college. I graduated from Indiana University with a degree in Anatomy and Physiology in 1957 and the courses there had already gone liberal. The State College was funded by my parent's tax dollars and they had "NO" input regarding what was taught or what values were rewarded. The Law Schools teach Case Law, with little or nothing about the Constitution.

Article V of the Constitution

So you have all been given a pocket copy of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. On page 15 is Article V. It's just one short paragraph written in very clear and precise English. If you will turn to that we can read it.

"The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution, or, on the Application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several States, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments, which, in either Case, shall be valid to all Intents and Purposes, as Part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States, or by Conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other Mode of Ratification may be proposed by the Congress; Provided that no Amendment which may be made prior to the Year One thousand eight hundred and eight Shall in any Manner affect the first and fourth Clauses in the Ninth Section of the first Article; and that no State, without its Consent, shall be deprived of it's equal Suffrage in the Senate."

History of Article V Constitutional Convention Bills

This is not the first time a bill has been presented in the House proposing that Ohio General Assembly call for an Article 5 Constitutional Convention--- Actually in the last General Assembly, 131st, there were two bills, one calling for the traditional Article 5 Convention and one calling for an Article 5 Convention of States. We're being "horn-Swaggled" into thinking these are two different things, when they are one and the same. An Article V Convention is an Article V Convention, no matter what verbiage you attach in the bill. My question is "How many times do we have to defeat this same Bill- a bill calling for an Article V Convention. Rep. Magg did not sponsor this bill nor either of the two in the last General Assembly, but he was infamous for sponsoring the Article V Convention Bill in multiple previous sessions. And the groups and individuals with whom I associate have had to take time and precious resources to testify against the Article V Convention Bills and to educate multiple legislators regarding the fact that once a Convention is called, which has never been done since the creation of our Constitution, there is nothing in article V to delineate who the delegates are etc....no details. In this political climate, who would you trust with our Constitution? Do we have any Washington's, Madison's, Jefferson's?

27 Amendments

The first phrase of the first sentence of Article V delineates how we added the 27 amendments to our Constitution. The first 10 amendments make up our Bill of Rights and were ratified effective Dec. 15, 1791. If citizens want a Constitutional Amendment to Balance the Federal Budget, or for Term Limits for members of Congress, this is the way to do it. Currently our Constitution has been woefully ignored by all three branches of our Federal Government— What makes anyone think that adding an amendment will make any difference? As the founding fathers have said, this Constitution will function only for a moral and ethical people. You can't make enough laws to "control" a lawless population. In that vein we have a Republic not a Democracy. Every time you say our pledge, you say "to the Republic for which it stands," The Founding Fathers said a Democracy is a Mobocracy and is due for a short and bloody end. It's also a truism that "If you have a Government big enough to give you all you need (want), you have a Government big enough to take all you have." At least we still have our Constitution and have the opportunity to elect moral and ethical Congressmen.

Groups Behind the Push for an Article V Convention

So who is going around the country spending big money to push for an Article V Convention? The one I know the most about is the American Legislative Council ALEC. I have a copy of their "Proposing Constitutional Amendments by a Convention of the States: A Handbook for State Lawmakers". This Non-Governmental Organization NGO, another term for well-heeled lobbyists, has been around for a long time. They holds meetings for legislators and hand out prepared bills to be introduced. There are apparently multiple multiple groups- Of course there's the group pushing this bill HJR 2 , the Convention of States COS people. Just found out about another group -Constitution 2020- "a powerful blueprint for implementing a Marxist vision of constitutional law." It's all driven by Big Money and people who are not interested in having a nation with a Constitution that's "of the people, for the people and by the people." Our Constitution is what allows us to be the "Shining Beacon on the Hill." It's why everyone wants to come here. Our Constitution was not Free- it was bought with blood and it has been paid for over and over with the blood of our young men. My husband is retired Air Force- Viet Nam.

Are there any questions that I might be able to answer?

I want to thank you all for having the patience to listen to the "ramblings" of an Old Lady- For showing respect to someone who is definitely Your Elder... In closing – My Daughter-in-Law, now Grandmother of my four Great-Grand Children, gave me a Plaque at Christmas which says " I am not a Control Freak, I just know what is best for Everyone." It's hanging on a cabinet door in my Kitchen!

