

Wynne Coleman:

Written Testimony against SJR1

Submitted to the Ohio Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee

I respectfully submit this written testimony in opposition to SJR1.

I am the Chair of *No Convention of States North Carolina (NoCOS-NC)*, a non-partisan grassroots committee made up of individual North Carolina citizens (SEE DESCRIPTION BELOW.)

It is not my usual practice to contact Members of other State Legislatures. In this case, I persistently do so because the convening of a legitimate Article V convention, or even of a so-called “convention of the states,” affects ALL AMERICANS. I am grateful that as state legislators have looked more deeply into the subject, an application for a Convention of States has not passed **in any state** since May, 2017.

I urge you to **VOTE NO on SJR1, an Ohio application for a Convention of States.**

NoCOSNC is opposed to a Convention of States because:

- There is no such thing as a Convention of States (COS) under Article V. It is an invented process with an invented history. Newly named and devised in 2010, the inventors compare an Article V convention to ordinary multi-state meetings that took place at certain points in our nation’s history. This type of meeting was sometimes referred to as a “convention of the states.” The inventors of today propose a very different convention method than the Founders established in Article V. The Convention of States supporters’ proposed method is for the state legislatures to control the convention process by sending state legislators as delegates to the convention.
- The only thing the States can do is apply for (request, ask) Congress to call an Article V convention. Their authority stops there. Congress has indicated that it has the authority to make details for the convention, but even this has not been decided. (As Congressional Research Service Reports for 2014, 2016 and the recent update in 2017 confirm.)
- The convention has sovereign authority. The delegates to the convention represent the sovereign people, not state legislatures and not Congress. Once the Convention convenes, **paragraph 2 of the Declaration of Independence**, gives delegates the authority as government-makers to throw out proposed rules by any outside entity, make their own rules and **potentially make a new government**. This includes what entities would ratify the amendments that the Convention has proposed. **The Convention could change the rules from the**

current 38 States necessary to ratify an amendment and turn the ratification process over to the President, or some other entity.

- The Legislatures can make laws for their State, but have no authority over the convention. State Legislatures **do not have the legal authority to fine, jail or penalize the delegates they send to the convention.** Once at the convention, the delegates represent the People, not the Legislatures.
- The recent revival of an outcry for an Article V convention is not genuinely from “We the People.” It is fueled by out-of-state special interest organizations that show up just about every twenty years with a new ploy to convene a very risky convention – then they pass it off as a grassroots movement. The movement is driven in the background by powerful wealthy elites (from the Right and the Left) who want to change the Constitution beyond recognition to suit their purposes.
- The potential for unintended consequences abound. Although, the stated goal of the Convention of States supporters is to “rein in” or “restrain” the federal government, many of the amendments proposed by “conservative” COS supporters do not reduce or even limit the power of the federal government, they EXPAND it and weaken the Constitution and weaken the power of the states in the process. (Specific examples are available upon request.) And most Democratic Legislators have said that they do not want to risk losing the rights they have fought so hard to attain.

In 1991, when a similar attempt to convene a convention was in play, respected law Professor Christopher Brown (Univ. of Maryland) stated: “[A convention] would create a major distraction to ordinary concerns, imposing a disabling effect on this country’s domestic and foreign policies.”

Tensions are high in this second year of the Trump administration. Our nation is as polarized and volatile as it has ever been. It is difficult to tell what reports in the media are accurate. The last thing we need is the “major distraction” and the “disabling effect” of a constitutional convention – or of an Article V convention that goes by any other name. There will be unintended consequences for sure.

The only solution is for the People and their elected officials to know the Constitution AS IS and to use it more effectively.

Yours for the Constitution,

Wynne Coleman, Chair,

No Convention of States North Carolina



No Convention of States North Carolina (NoCOS-NC) is a grassroots committee made up of individual North Carolina citizens dedicated to preserving the U.S. Constitution by opposing a North Carolina application for an Article V Convention of States. In addition to Article V Convention of States, NoCOS-NC opposes all North Carolina applications for any proposed form of Article V convention. This committee is non-partisan. It is not connected to other organizations. It is willing to work side-by-side with other organizations of like mind. Its purpose is to educate the people of North Carolina on the dangers of an Article V convention of States and to enable the people to communicate directly with their legislators on this critical issue.

If you have questions or would like to work with us, you can contact us at wynne@nocosc.com.

Or call Wynne Coleman at **919-744-0014** between the hours of 9am-9pm

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NoCOSNC?fref=ts>