

Testimony in Support of HJR1 from Katelyn Steed Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chairwoman Jon, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the Committee - Our entire adult lives, my husband and I have been paying income taxes, as there is no option to abstain from these expenses. In 2020, we sent over \$18,000.00 to Washington, D.C., for these federal taxes. However, there is no traceability for the average, middle-class worker to determine exactly where their dollars and cents are spent. Recently, with the COVID stimulus packages, there are numerous reports of American tax dollars being sent abroad for foreign infrastructure projects. In what other aspect of our private lives do Americans spend this large of an amount of money and NOT receive an itemized receipt for their purchases?

While the American people have the ability to review congressional bills, the layperson does not have the level of education in law required to understand the inner workings of a 5,000+ page bill. It is unrealistic and near impossible to determine where my personal federal tax dollars, or even the collective contribution of all Ohioans, is spent. And, as workers in our mid-thirties, we are uncertain if the mandatory Social Security and Medicare expenses we see taken from our pay will ever be available when we reach retirement age. How can a government that is constitutionally tasked with managing both the legislating of tax rates and dispersing these taxes not be considered a conflict of interest?

In my local township of Nimishilin, in northeast Ohio, had our taxes been allowed to support my local community, we could have contributed road repairs and ploughing. Instead, we have no idea nor say in how our money was spent. How can we accept this when the government cannot even balance a budget?

I, for one, as a law-abiding, tax-paying American citizen, have more questions than answers about the functionality and oversight of our federal government. Many Americans I speak with feel the same, and so we agree that the best action to address this is by holding a Convention of States as outlined in Article V of the Constitution. We have always been taught that America is run "by the people," however, with the example I have outlined today, while I am confident THAT I am funding our government, I have no idea HOW I am funding it. I feel it is the obligation of the common people, as inheritors of this amazing representative democracy granted to us by the forefathers, to step up and exercise the rights granted to the states as part of Article V.

The Convention of States action, as outlined in Article V, is not a complete abolition of our Constitution. Additionally, as proven in the 33 previous state conventions throughout our history, there is no evidence of the mythical "runaway convention." In fact, in every state convention ever held, there has always been a specified topic or agenda which has prevented any deviation. Ohio HJR1, in fact, limits this proposed convention on the grounds of imposing fiscal restraints, limiting power and jurisdiction, and term limits on congressional members of the federal government. Beyond that, this Convention of States would be constitutionally unable to broach other topics.

By passing the Convention of States resolution in our great state of Ohio, we will be contributing to the requisite 2/3 of states needed to initiate this action at a national level. As a proud Ohioan, nothing would warm my heart more than to know that our state officials listened to our citizens and joined this movement at the very beginning.

While there are many additional reasons to support a Convention of States, I can find no stronger argument than to ensure accountability for our elected federal officials so that we American citizens have the ability to understand what we're paying for each time our taxes are deducted.

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