

## **Proponent Testimony**

### **HJR 2 Elizabeth Margolius**

“Hard times create strong men. Strong men create good times. Good times create weak men, and weak men create hard times.” Throughout the course of history, great civilizations have collapsed as a result of the choices of weak men and women; from dividing their kingdoms, to unsuccessfully fighting invaders, to stealing thrones, and endless wars and spending, weak leaders are directly responsible for the destruction of their empires.

What does it mean to be weak? Poor leaders are not weak of strength, but of virtue and strong character. Wilfred McClay said, “the founding generation who knew about the history of previous republics, knew that the single most common characteristic of a republic was its fragility. Everything depended upon the virtuous character of the citizenry...to place the well-being of the public over and above their own personal interests. Such civic virtue was rare and hard to maintain in a whole society.” Perhaps this is why the founding generation, deeply understanding history, formally declared in 1776, “That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it and to institute new Government....but when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably, the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.”

The Declaration of Independence is the WHY and the Constitution is the HOW. Most of us understand the basis of why, but neglect to truly understand the how, other than through formal legal process. We shall never again be reduced to despotism because we have the right to abolish or alter a government which abuses its powers. Article V is the legal process by which we exercise that right. “On the application of the legislature of two thirds of several states, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which in either case, shall be valid in all intents and purposes, as part of this constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three fourths of the several states.”

The founders foresaw the possibility of a republic gone sour because they understood past republics, like Rome. And because of their understanding of human nature and weak men, they gave us permission to revise our government as we see fit in order to continue our unalienable rights of Life, Liberty, and Happiness.

So today, I ask you to support the entire Constitution, including Article V, and HJR 2, as it was determined to be the best solution to rein in morally weak leaders who dare to destroy their empires. Will you be the virtuous men and women who create good times, or will you also become the weak leaders who create hard times?