

Chairman Peterson, members of the committee,

My name is David Sellers. I'm 23 years old (will be 24 tomorrow), and live outside of Hillsboro, about an hour east of Cincinnati. I'm the oldest of 13 children, and a Catholic like the rest of my family - hence the 13 children. Like most Americans, I'm concerned about the state of our nation.

I don't need to convince you that having a national debt nearly half again the combined market value of the Fortune 500 companies is a problem. You don't need persuaded that having the federal government control roughly two thirds of our state's budget, as well as that of every other state, is a problem. The Federal Code of Regulations, over 200 volumes long, is an increasingly oppressive burden on small businesses and intrusion into every aspect of American life. But worst of all, the Americans and Ohioans this Code burdens had no say in a single word of that Code, written by unelected and unaccountable bureaucrats. This – legislation with representation – is the primary reason we fought the Revolution. It is cold-blooded tyranny, pure and simple; and as Americans, there is nothing we can agree on more than that tyranny is a problem, a problem worth fighting with everything we have.

Before you can address a problem, you have to know what caused it. Some people might say our troubles were caused by corrupt people in office. And while there certainly is corruption in government, that's not the heart of the issue. The Founders knew that there would always be corruption in government, and so they built the government to run despite that corruption, by pitting greed against greed through checks and balances. The real cause of federal tyranny is the Supreme Court's warping of those checks and balances, by interpreting parts of the Constitution to give the federal government powers they were never intended to have.

The clear solution, then, is to amend the Constitution to close these loopholes and bind the Supreme Court's hands in giving a proper interpretation to the Constitution. This cannot be done through amendments proposed by Congress, because Congress will never propose amendments to limit its own power. This, in simplified terms, is the exact reasoning used by the Father of the Bill of Rights, Col. George Mason, when he proposed the second amendment method which lies before you now, and which was so approved by the Founders that it was added to our Constitution by unanimous consent and without debate.

The Founders approved this method by their actions, too. The first application for an Article V convention of states was passed by Virginia on November 14, 1788 – less than five months after Rhode Island became the last state to ratify the new Constitution. Since then, over 400 applications have been submitted by the States for Article V conventions on a wide spectrum of topics.

The Founders were not the only great minds to approve of this method. Abraham Lincoln, in his First Inaugural Address, stated that "the convention mode seems preferable, in that it allows amendments to originate with the people themselves." The late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia said that, "The one remedy [to federal overreach] specifically provided for in the Constitution is the amendment process that bypasses Congress. I would like to see that amendment process used just once."

To those of you who are unsure or afraid of the opposition's claims that this convention cannot be checked and would exceed the three topics in the resolution before you, I would submit three things. First, the brilliance of our Constitution which has permitted it to last longer than any other in history are the extensive checks and balances which were placed in it by the Founders. Why would they spend four months in the sweltering summer heat of a closed building with no ventilation, debating over every jot and tittle to balance the Constitution as perfectly as humanly possible; only to add, by unanimous consent and without debate, a provision whereby the Constitution could be completely changed or replaced without any checks whatsoever? The idea is too ridiculous to entertain.

Secondly, I and my family have been involved in and researching this project for nearly eight years now. We came to it with no opinion, and after our initial research became firm supporters. The need for this solution is great, and the opposition arguments are legally and historically unfounded and untrue, especially the claims that the Constitutional Convention was a runaway or changed the ratification process. Nothing could be further from the truth, and nearly eight years of learning about this topic has only strengthened my conviction.

Thirdly and lastly, America was not built on fear. We are the land of the brave. By all counts, our nation's founding was doomed to fail in every way imaginable, yet our Founders committed their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor to making it happen anyway. Even if the fears of our opposition had any basis, it is our duty as Americans to set aside those fears, to oppose tyranny and make this solution work despite any odds, for it is the only realistic solution at our disposal. To do otherwise would be a disgrace to the millions who have sacrificed before us, not because there was no risk of failure, but because it was what had to be done to secure the blessings of liberty for themselves and their posterity. I urge you to pass this resolution. God bless you, and God bless America.