



Representative Bernie Willis

74th House District

House Bill 607

House Government Oversight Committee

June 11th, 2024

Chairman Peterson, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Humphrey, and members of the House Government Oversight committee, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to allow Representative McClain and myself to speak on H.B. 607. This bill is direct in nature as it establishes the delegate appointing procedures, delegate action limits and penalties for violating the purpose for a Convention of States.

I will be brief in my testimony and explain that this legislation directly answers issues surrounding House Joint Resolution 3 calling for an Article V Convention of States that Representative McClain and I jointly sponsored. While by now I am confident you are all aware of what the Convention of States aims to accomplish, specifically H.B. 607 sets up clear and definitive guidelines on how the delegates for the convention will be chosen, as well as stipulating their oversight. These delegates will be chosen by the Generally Assembly and must meet distinct criteria to be considered for the position.

Additionally, the delegates will be subject to an appointed advisory committee to oversee their actions and ensure they do not act outside the scope of their given authority. This commission would be made up of the following members: (1) A member of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate; (2) A member of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House; (3) A member of the General Assembly nominated by joint action of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House and approved by the majority of those voting in each chamber.

Finally, it was imperative to set distinct guidelines on unauthorized delegate actions. These include but are not limited to:

- Voting for or otherwise promoting any change to the traditional convention rule of decision on the floor and in the committee of the whole, including that each state has one vote.

- Voting in favor of any proposed amendment that is outside the scope of the subject matter as limited by the general assembly's original application to congress for a Convention of States.

Should these be violated, the delegate will be guilty of a felony of the third degree. This rule will be established to ensure that the purpose for the convention is never changed from its initial call, preventing a “runaway” convention.

I want to thank Representative McClain for his commitment in continuing this mission and spearheading this nationwide campaign on behalf of our great state. I thank you for your consideration of H.B. 607, and I am happy to attempt to answer any questions you may have.