

Testimony
of
Shawn Comstock
Kansas House of Representatives
Federal and State Affairs Committee Hearing
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My name is Shawn Comstock. I am a father of 5 who was born in Kansas over 50 years ago and still live here today. I work in the energy sector as an engineering consultant. I have had and still continue to enjoy a work relationship with those employed by our federal government. My testimony today is in support of a resolution calling for an Article V Convention of States.

The founding fathers created the United States of America's Constitution following a great deal of debate. Written by those who had experienced the tyranny of a government that did not represent them or respect their basic rights as human beings, they understood well the potential abuses of government power. They were concerned that the federal government, which was intended to unite the many states under a single republic that ensured basic human rights, could instead become a new tool for the few to subjugate the many through the abuse of power.

I learned in high school that the US Constitution was a short hand written document that is comprised of only a few typewritten pages in our time. Imagine my surprise as an adult when I found out the US Government instead considers our US Constitution to be a large book comprised of over 2,700 pages. That is because every Supreme Court ruling is considered by our present federal government to be a supplement to our US Constitution. The one branch of the government who is not subject to the electorate silently created a new Constitution and continues to do so today. This is not what our founding fathers intended, rather, it is what they feared.

Article V of our US Constitution is unique in that it not only was unanimously approved by our founding fathers, there was also no record of any debate regarding its need. While some may express fear regarding the use of this part of the US Constitution today, our founding fathers had no fear or doubts about the need of Article V. We should have no fear in Kansas about calling for an Article V Convention for the same reasons. Proposed Article V Amendments must be approved by 38 state legislatures before becoming law. This high bar ensures overwhelming public support is needed for every Amendment proposed. The Article V Convention described by our US Constitution is merely a forum for the purposes of debating and drafting Amendment proposals.

There are many Amendments to our US Constitution. Article V of our US Constitution has been used successfully to put them there. Not all have had the impact that was desired. The intentions of some were greatly undermined by Supreme Court rulings. In every case, there was overwhelming public support that enabled the proposed amendments to be approved by the necessary number of states. This is the situation we presently have in America with the public's support. The Convention of States effort is directed at addressing the very serious problems created by our federal government through a grass-roots bi-partisan efforts that continues to grow.

America has very serious and grave problems that are only growing worse by being ignored. It is not too late to change the course of our great nation. Our state legislatures may use the US Constitution to stem

the increasingly belligerent and authoritative nature of our federal government. This can only be accomplished by the Article V Convention that HCR 5009 seeks to call. The Article V Convention will be a forum where a debate can be held and Amendment proposals can be drafted. This process will restore the public's faith in their federal government, which is now at an all-time low. Calling for a Convention of States is merely the beginning of the process. Those Amendment proposals coming out of the Article V Convention will subsequently be considered by every state legislature, which will give every citizen with an opinion the opportunity to influence the outcome in their respective state.

Because of success in calling for an Article V Convention resolution in other states, those in opposition are focusing their resources in states like ours who are on the precipice of approval in the legislature. The opposition's underhanded tactics are known and have been effective in swaying past debates regarding this matter.

Be wary of those who are not citizens of Kansas, but would represent themselves as such to thwart America from moving forward. I am a concerned Kansas citizen who is also a registered voter, with a Kansas phone number and a Kansas address. My testimony is best verified by the House Representative who will recognize my name as a bona-fide constituent of our great state of Kansas, Eric Smith. This will certainly not be the case for many of those in opposition to the effort of the Convention of States who may contact your office. We unfortunately know that phone numbers can be spoofed to hide a caller's real identity. There is also no way to verify a person's real address or state citizenry with an email, which is generated in great numbers every day for any number of scams. I pray the Kansas Legislature as a whole puts forth due diligence in recognizing these frauds when considering this important matter.

In closing, I'd like to convey my appreciation of your civil service. I know supporting HCR 5009 requires courage in the face of a loud minority who is dedicated to thwarting any constitutional amendments regardless of the process. In years past, a minority of legislators did not have the courage to support this proposal. Not all of them returned to the legislature after the subsequent election. Significant public support from ordinary Kansas citizens like myself is why this proposal is being considered by the Kansas legislature. I humbly ask that you consult with those who you know are your constituents when considering this matter and support the approval of this resolution.

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