

**KANSAS SENATE
FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
TESTIMONY**

March 13, 2023

SCR1607

Proponent

John Stepnoski

Volunteer Convention of States Kansas

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of SCR1607.

I am proud to say that both sets of my grandparents were immigrants that came to the United States for a better life believing that Liberty and Freedom were available to everyone who worked hard.

As I was growing up a few of the values my family instilled in me was hard work and the drive to succeed. They worked hard to build a better life for me.

My confidence in working and creating a good life for myself and my family is based on the founding principles of everyone having the opportunity to succeed in a country founded on liberty and freedom. Our founders wrote in the Declaration of Independence, “all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

I am deeply concerned that our children and grandchildren will not have the same opportunities I have had.

The Founders foresaw a time when the States would need to have the ability to amend the Constitution because of the overreach by the federal government was creating the Tyranny our forefathers fought so valiantly to stop. And I believe that is what we are experiencing today.

I support an Article V Convention of the States because it is clear that the Federal government is far exceeding its’ intended authority as written in the US Constitution. Our country was founded as a Democratic Republic with clear separation of powers. The States created the Federal Government not the other way around. With that in mind most rights are reserved to the states, but over time those have increasingly been taken away in the form of:

- A Federal Deficit which now exceeds 31 trillion dollars, with no end in sight of our Federal Government reigning in its’ irresponsible fiscal policies.**
- Career Politicians that no longer represent their constituents but put their own interests first.**
- Federal Mandates requiring vaccinations, lockdowns, loss of livelihood of employees if they don’t comply and many other examples of states’ rights being compromised.**

People say that a Convention of the States will produce a runaway convention. I would argue that over the past 200 plus years when Congress proposed the 27 Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, they used a

similar process as would be used when the States make application to have an Article V Convention of the States to propose an Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

If the logic of a runaway convention is to be believed then we trust our state legislatures less than we trust the people we elected to represent us in Washington D.C.

The process to propose and to add an Amendment to the Constitution is similar whether proposed by Congress or through a **Convention of the States**:

- Two thirds of each House of Congress must agree on a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution for it to be considered.
- **In Article V of the Constitution is says two thirds of the several states have to agree on a resolution calling for a meeting to propose an amendment to the U.S. Constitution. At the Convention a majority of the States must agree on the proposed amendment before it can go to the States for a vote.**
- Once Congress proposes an amendment and it is passed out of Congress, Three Fourths of the several States must vote yes on the proposed amendment for it to become part of the U.S. Constitution.
- **In Article V of the Constitution is says that Three Fourths of the several States must vote yes on the proposed amendment for it to become part of the U.S. Constitution whether it was initiated by Congress to the States or from a Convention of the States to the States for ratification.**

The greater fear I have is that by not calling for a Convention of the States to propose amendments to the Constitution to reign in our out-of-control federal government we will lose the Liberty our forefathers fought so valiantly to preserve and give us.

Thank you.