

What's Wrong With Con Con?

- It would throw confusion, uncertainty, and court cases around our governmental process by opening up our entire Constitution to be picked apart by special-interest groups which want various changes. This would endanger our American form of government, make us look foolish in the eyes of the world, unsettle our financial markets, and force all of us to refight the same battles that the Founding Fathers so brilliantly won in the Constitutional Convention of 1787. George Washington and James Madison both called our Constitution a "miracle." It's unlikely that a miracle could happen again.

- George Bush is our 41st President. No other country in history has had 41 peaceful transfers of power from one regime to the next. "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." We observe the Bicentennial of our Bill of Rights in 1991 — would a Con Con reject the Bill of Rights today?

- The most influential players in a Con Con drama today would be Big Media (such as Dan Rather and Sam Donaldson) giving on-the-spot interviews and predictions of what they are trying to make happen, while television would show daily pictures of radical demonstrators demanding constitutional changes. The original Constitutional Convention of 1787 deliberated in complete secrecy and there were no leaks to the press. That is impossible today.

32 States Passed Con Con/BBA Resolutions

1975 Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi
1976 Delaware, Georgia, South Carolina, Virginia
1977 Maryland, Tennessee
1978 Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Wyoming
1979 Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota*, Texas, Utah*
1982 Alaska 1983 Missouri

*Also passed a Con Con/Limitation of Terms Resolution

Three States Rescinded Their Con Con Resolutions

1988 Alabama, Florida 1990 Louisiana

18 States Never Passed Con Con/BBA Resolutions

California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin

America's Challenge

The miracle of our great United States Constitution is that it has lasted two centuries, accommodating our great geographic, population and economic expansion, while preserving individual liberties. Many different groups — both from the left and the right — are supporting major constitutional changes. Some even want to change our entire form of government. A new national Constitutional Convention would open up a Pandora's Box of unnecessary troubles.

Among the patriotic groups solidly opposed to calling a new Constitutional Convention are the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Those who have fought for America realize how precious our Constitution is. Changes should be made in the traditional way that 26 amendments were added to our Constitution — one amendment at a time.

No James Madisons, George Washingtons, Ben Franklins, or Alexander Hamiltons are evident in America today. We should not risk making our Constitution the political plaything of those who want to rewrite our great Constitution. They have a hidden agenda and — like a chameleon — they change the color of their fundraising tactics in order to mask their Con Con purposes.

For further information and additional copies of this flier @ \$10 per 100, contact Eagle Forum. Since 1972, Eagle Forum has been protecting the U.S. Constitution against radical groups trying to change our Constitution.

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It's All The Same Animal!



A Chameleon That Changes Color.

It's Still a Con Game — A Con Con Game!

How Con Con Changed Color

Back in the 1970s, some people started campaigning for a Balanced Budget Amendment (BBA) to the U.S. Constitution. When BBA failed to get the support of enough Americans, its sponsors went around to State Legislatures and introduced resolutions calling for a new national Constitutional Convention (known as a Con Con) to consider a BBA.

At first, some Legislatures passed a resolution demanding a BBA without realizing that a Con Con was in the fine print. Most of the Con Con/BBA people claimed that a Con Con would never really happen, or if it did happen it would be limited to considering only a BBA, or that there was only “one chance in a hundred million” that a “runaway Con Con” would consider other issues.

Under Article V of the Constitution, Congress “shall call” a Constitutional Convention to propose “Amendments” if two-thirds (34) of the states request one. When we got close to that number and Con Con became a real possibility, the tide turned. Not a single state passed a Con Con/BBA resolution after 1983, despite heated battles in many legislatures. Since then three states rescinded their Con Con/BBA resolutions: Alabama, Florida and Louisiana.

Then, like a chameleon, the groups promoting a Con Con/BBA changed color and grabbed another issue to “ride” to a Con Con: the Limitation of Congressional Terms. All their campaign literature urges action in the State Legislatures (where Con Con resolutions are passed) rather than action in Congress (where constitutional amendments are passed). Here are some direct quotations: “We only need 34 state legislatures . . .” “. . . the calling of a citizen convention . . .” “. . . a Constitutional amendment to be passed by our state legislature . . .” “. . . bypass Congress and amend the Constitution through state legislatures.”



The best 20th-century example of a national bipartisan convention run by the Federal Government is the International Women’s Year Convention in Houston in 1977. It was a tug-of-war between special-interest groups — plagued by election frauds, dictatorial tactics, disorderly demonstrations, and media manipulation. Fortunately, it had no legal effect.

Myths About Con Con



Myth #1

“Polls show that Americans want a **Balanced Budget Amendment**” or “. . . a **Limitation of Congressional Terms Amendment**.”

But Americans do **not** want a Constitutional Convention as a means of getting any goal — and no survey says they do. The end does not justify the means. Americans do not want anyone “messing around with our Constitution.”



Myth #2

“A Con Con can be limited to **one issue**.”

The best legal authorities say this is false.

For example, former Chief Justice Warren Burger said: “The Convention could make its own rules and set its own agenda . . . After a Convention is convened, it will be too late to stop the Convention if we don’t like its agenda.”

All those promoting a Con Con are also promoting at least two, and often many, major changes in the Constitution.

The same groups that for 15 years have been promoting a Con Con to enact a BBA are now promoting a Con Con to get Limitation of Congressional Terms. If a Con Con ever happens, we can be sure they would open up a Con Con to more than one issue.

One of the Con Con spokesmen — who for years said a Convention would be limited to a single issue — now says he is considering asking the Supreme Court to **add together** the Con Con resolutions passed “on different topics . . . to reach the two-thirds threshold.”



Myth #3

“A Con Con couldn’t do any **more mischief** than our current **mischievous Congress**, because Congress is just like a ‘**continuing convention**’ all year round.”

This is false because —

1. Delegates to a Constitutional Convention do not have to swear to uphold and defend the U.S. Constitution, and would therefore be free (like the 1787 Convention Delegates) to throw out the existing Constitution and start from scratch with a completely new document. Congress, on the other hand, is bound by Article VI of our present Constitution which requires every member to take an oath to support our present Constitution.

2. Congress must muster a two-thirds majority in each House in order to propose any constitutional change. No one knows whether or not a Constitutional Convention would have a two-thirds rule, and we can’t know until a Convention is actually convened.

3. Any action by Congress must pass two Houses. Since a Constitutional Convention would not have two houses, the big-population states would control the Convention and the small-population states would be irrelevant.

4. Delegates to a Constitutional Convention will never run for re-election, so they would be as free from accountability to the voters as the life-tenured federal judges.

5. We know for sure that any constitutional change voted out by Congress will not become part of the U.S. Constitution unless it is ratified by 38 of the 50 states. No one knows for sure whether or not this requirement would be true for any action voted by a Constitutional Convention. If a Convention can change other portions of the Constitution, what is to prevent it from changing the Article V requirement that ratification requires three-fourths of the states (just as the 1787 Convention reduced the ratification requirement from 100% to 75%)?