

Republican controlled legislative chambers vote against calling an Article V convention

State legislative chambers controlled by Republicans have consistently voted against calling an Article V constitutional convention, citing concerns about the threat of a ‘runaway convention’ and special interests’ influence over the process. In the 2017 state legislative sessions:

- The [Idaho Senate voted 24-11](#) against calling an Article V constitutional convention to impose a federal balanced budget amendment.
- The [South Dakota House of Representatives voted 40-28](#) against calling an Article V constitutional convention to impose fiscal restraints on the federal government, limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government, and limit the terms of office for federal officials and for members of Congress.
- The [North Carolina House of Representatives voted 59-53](#) against calling an Article V constitutional convention to impose fiscal restraints on the federal government, limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government, and limit the terms of office for federal officials and for members of Congress.
- The [Utah Senate voted 16-12](#) against calling an Article V constitutional convention to impose fiscal restraints on the federal government, limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government, and limit the terms of office for federal officials and for members of Congress.
- The [Wyoming House of Representatives voted 42-18](#) against calling an Article V constitutional convention to impose fiscal restraints on the federal government, limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government, and limit the terms of office for federal officials and for members of Congress.
- Although not controlled by Republicans, both chambers of the [Nevada legislature unanimously](#) rescinded its application calling for an Article V constitutional convention to impose a federal balanced budget amendment.

Republican State Legislators Warn Against an Article V Convention

“It’s like playing Russian roulette. We kind of think it would work out well. You put a bullet in one chamber, the odds of it working are pretty good. But the consequences of being wrong are immeasurable.” – [Sen. Richard Black \(R-VA\)](#)

“This is something very fundamental that may alter the structure of government... There is no clear understanding how this would proceed and I urge a no vote on that.” [Del. Robert G. Marshall, \(R-VA\)](#)

“I submit to you that voting for this resolution can be a dangerous thing especially in this day and age when we are a deeply divided nation.” – [Rep. Blaine "Chip" Campbell \(R-SD\)](#)

“The purpose of this convention is for proposing amendments. I do not think there is a constitutional way to bind that convention. It is in the plain text of Article V which I read to this body word for word.... When the convention starts, it’s open season. That could mean a repeal of the second amendment, a repeal of the fourth, fifth, and sixth amendments. Certainly a there’s lot of good that could be done but the street goes both ways, make no question about it.” – [Sen. Anthony Sykes \(R-OK\)](#)

“This is definitely entering into uncharted territory... We cannot control what comes out of this convention. We don’t know who all would go up there... It would be a mess. Under the conditions of our government today and the bipolar ideas of what’s going on out there, because there is two different ideas as to which direction we should go, we need to think this through.” – [Sen. Ron Sharp \(R-OK\)](#)

“As we have talked that Article V would open the door for a Constitution to be completely rewritten. Are you willing to gamble that for your children and your grandchildren’s future?... We are venturing on grounds that are uncertain. It’s not fear to question. It’s not fear to have doubts. There are many that believe this will be a runaway convention. I urge you to vote no.” - [Rep. Mike Ritze \(R-OK\)](#)

“I care about the future. But I don’t think this is the way to go about addressing the debt, and our founding fathers- they came from a different mindset. They had just come out of a revolution. They knew what it meant to pay the price for freedom. We don’t understand that today. They were concerned with more than just budgets and dollars. They were concerned about life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” - [Rep. Sally Kern \(R-OK\)](#)

“The fact of the matter is everything today is controlled by special interest. If you don’t believe that, just walk out into the lobby at any time during the day. The fact of the matter is this is too important of an issue. It will be out of control.” - [Rep. David Brumbaugh \(R-OK\)](#)

“If you read Article V, it says this is a convention for the purpose of approving amendments. That is a constitutional convention, ladies and gentlemen, it is a convention. And it opens up every bit of the constitution because we as a state cannot restrict it and neither can congress... It’s

a convention like every other convention you've ever been to, where they make their own rules, they set their own agenda. End of story. One amendment can fundamentally alter your rights under the constitution. One amendment can fundamentally remove your liberties. It sets a dangerous precedent. It is a very dangerous move." – [Rep. Michael Speciale \(R-NC\)](#)

"The proposed Article V Convention is not the answer we seek. That option carries an unwarranted risk to our sacred Constitution. The very fact you have heard so much concern expressed about the possibility of a Convention from both major political parties, from conservatives and liberals, from people from urban and rural areas, from academicians, from Constitutional lawyers, and millions of voters across our nation, should serve as a recognizable warning to the prudent." - [Sen. Dan Foreman \(R-ID\)](#)

"As I look at the procedural uncertainties and the risks that could happen out of that Convention, on balance, I am unwilling today to support Concurrent Resolution 108." - [Sen. Bart Davis \(R-ID\)](#)

"If we go down this rabbit hole, what are we going to find at the end of the tunnel?" he said. "When I think about the lobbyist money and where we are today as a society, I just don't see anything good coming out of it." – [Rep. John Becker \(R-OH\)](#)

"We are advocating that we erase and alter all which [American soldiers] have died for...I understand there are people out here that are upset with the Federal government. I think many of us are...This [ConCon effort] is like a petulant teenager that has lost a couple basketball games and plans to burn down the gymnasium. This is like a person who has found rats in their house and decides to solve the problem with dynamite...The whole thing hinges on one salient point: can these delegates be controlled?...The answer by many legal scholars is no. There is no control...The problem is not the Constitution...Drafting another version is not a good idea at this point...If this bill comes to the floor I most likely will filibuster and bring everything else down with it. That is how dangerous I think this thing is." – [Sen. Craig Estes \(R-TX\)](#)

"If you think a convention cannot be hijacked, then why have I noticed that those who support a convention over the last five years have changed and began to try to buckle up so that it cannot be hijacked...When I hear people say that the Article V process is clearly defined and easy to get through, I get back to the point that Article V is not simply a single convention, it is an entire process...The Convention of States and Compact of States alter Article V language and argue that states must agree on an agenda. Agenda is nowhere mentioned in Article V. It is a self-directed conference, and it's hard to imagine how they can limit it...The Article V folks think all our problems will be solved with a ConCon, with an amendment, but unless the people who are supposed to uphold the law follow the law, changing the law or increasing punishment will not work...I hear this a tool and there is no other way, but if you were in a life boat and found a tool that is a drill, do you begin drilling? No, you are looking for other tools...They {the ConCon advocates} cannot decide what amendments would be proposed." – [Congressman and former Senate President Andy Biggs \(R-AZ\)](#)