



Written by [Peter Rykowski](#) on September 27, 2022

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Taking Action to Defend the Constitution

The U.S. Constitution is under attack. On one hand, the federal government is blatantly ignoring its constitutional limitations, usurping power not delegated to it by the Constitution. On the other hand, certain individuals and groups — many of whom are well-meaning — are pushing false solutions such as an Article V Convention, or Con-Con, that threatens the Constitution and the God-given rights it protects.

Thankfully, members of The John Birch Society (JBS) and other concerned patriots are standing up to defend the Constitution from this two-pronged attack. And as they inform Americans about the dangers of a Con-Con, along with the proper solution to federal usurpations, they are seeing an increasing number of victories in this battle.

Defeating the Con-Con in Ohio

One such victory occurred this year in Ohio. On May 24, the state Senate General Government Budget Committee held a hearing on Senate Joint Resolution 4, which follows the wording of Mark Meckler's Convention of States (COS) application, urging Congress to call a convention to propose amendments "that impose fiscal restraints on the federal government, limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government, and limit the terms of office for its officials and Members of Congress of the United States."

COS had put considerable effort into passing S. J. R. 4. For example, it had held multiple events advocating for a Con-Con and ensured that the resolutions went to a committee that it viewed as COS-friendly. Additionally, although the hearing was devoted to opposition testimony, the committee allowed COS President Mark Meckler and another COS supporter to give rebuttal testimony, an uncommon occurrence.





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Taking action: JBS members in Ohio worked together to defeat COS resolution S. J. R. 4, for which the state Senate General Government Budget Committee had scheduled a hearing.

However, these actions were no match for the efforts of JBS members, led by Ohio citizen and JBS Field Coordinator Robert Owens, and other Ohio patriots. In total, 16 opponents testified at the hearing, systematically shredding Meckler's claims. Most testimonies were concise and focused on a particular aspect of the debate over an Article V Convention, further strengthening their impact.

Among other points, the witnesses noted the precedent set by the 1787 Constitutional Convention, which went beyond its original purpose to merely revise the Articles of Confederation, did its work in secret, and changed the ratification rules. Others noted the Left's desire to change or abolish the Constitution, while others highlighted multiple legal experts who have warned against a convention. "This Convention is fraught with risk and uncertainty, and the stakes are extremely high," one witness noted.

The witnesses also highlighted nullification as a more effective and less-risky solution. Rather than seeking to change the Constitution — which the federal government ignores in the first place — state legislators should enforce it by nullifying unconstitutional federal actions. As some witnesses emphasized, fortitude is needed to stand up against the federal government.

Ultimately, the coordinated efforts of Ohio Birchers succeeded; the General Assembly recessed without acting on S. J. R. 4, despite the Con-Con proponents' expectations that the resolution would pass before the recess. Although the committee could possibly take up the resolution in the November/December lame-duck session, the likelihood of this is low, and Ohio Birchers scored a large victory by preventing its passage in the regular session.



Constitutional education: JBS member Robert Brown speaks on the dangers of an Article V Convention and the real solutions we have to rein in the federal government.

Defending the Constitution in Iowa

The pro-Constitution victory in Ohio was not the only one this year. In Iowa, Birchers and other patriots succeeded for the first time in adding an anti-Con-Con plank to the state Republican Party's platform. The plank, adopted at the Iowa GOP State Convention on June 11, states:



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We believe the United States Constitution, when properly obeyed and enforced, is an effective and timeless guiding instrument for the governing of our nation. Therefore, in view of the dire warnings from James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, four US Supreme Court Justices, and other eminent Jurists and scholars, we are opposed to the proposals of organizations such as “Convention of States” to ask Congress to call an Article V Convention.

This was not the only pro-Constitution modification of the party platform. In its 2020 platform, the Iowa GOP had stated that “we advocate a Balanced Budget Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.” (Currently, a so-called BBA is the focus of Con-Con applications in 26 states.) However, it removed this declaration in the 2022 platform, instead stating, “we advocate limiting federal expenditures to those enumerated powers under the United States Constitution.”

Furthermore, the state party declared its support for enforcing the Constitution’s existing provisions to rein in government. Another newly added plank states, “We support elected officials applying the 10th Amendment to limit the overreach of the federal government.”

COS had heavily lobbied Iowa legislators to pass its favored application for an Article V Convention. Not only did the Iowa GOP effectively repudiate its efforts, but the General Assembly did not act on any Con-Con resolutions this year.

The efforts of JBS members and other patriots played an essential role in this victory. Writing in the August *JBS Bulletin*, Iowa field coordinator Tammy Kobza stated that “through educating citizens, using COS’s own words to expose the dangers of a convention, and ensuring that constitutionalists became delegates, we won!” And in a separate statement to *The New American*, Kobza noted, “As more and more Iowans have joined a JBS chapter and have had access” to the resources provided by JBS and *The New American*, “it’s created the confidence to approach state legislators” about this topic.

Influencing State Legislators in Wisconsin

By informing state legislators on a given issue or topic, it is possible to change their opinion on that topic. That is something JBS members in Wisconsin found this summer.

State Representative Rachael Cabral-Guevara (R-Fox Crossing) had previously voted in favor of a COS Con-Con application and had endorsed convening a convention to propose a congressional term-limits amendment.

However, area JBS members, including this writer and led by Dave Kempen, took the initiative to inform Cabral-Guevara about the dangers of a convention. This involved sending articles and videos on this topic, contacting her office in opposition to a Con-Con, meeting in person, and speaking up at town-hall meetings.

At a local Tea Party meeting on August 1, Representative Cabral-Guevara announced that after reviewing the information and points that Kempen and the other members had given, she had decided to change her position and oppose a Con-Con. The nominee to replace her in the Assembly (Cabral-Guevara is running for state Senate), Nate Gustafson, also announced he would oppose a Con-Con. Although more work still needs to be done — for example, a resolution to rescind Wisconsin’s existing Con-Con applications must be introduced — this is a significant victory that illustrates the impact of



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actively reaching out to and informing state legislators.

Keeping Up the Struggle

These are just a selection of the many instances of JBS members and other patriots working in their states and communities to defend the Constitution. Elsewhere in the United States, they are working to stop new Con-Con applications and rescind existing ones — and since early 2021, Colorado, Illinois, and New Jersey have all rescinded their existing applications.

Several legislators and candidates who have continued to support a Con-Con were defeated in primary elections this year, including in Kentucky and South Dakota.

These victories will continue and accelerate if patriots continue and double down on their educational and activist efforts.



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