



**KENTUCKIANS FOR THE
COMMONWEALTH**

HJR 81 & HJR 119

OPENING UP THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

General Assembly 2018

Opening up the U.S. Constitution would jeopardize our democracy. A convention could lead to extreme, wide-reaching and unpredictable changes to the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. **This is extreme, and dangerous.**



House Joint Resolution 81 and **House Joint Resolution 119** call for a constitutional convention for the purpose of redefining the role and powers of the federal government.

Despite the stated intent to limit what a constitutional convention could consider, there are no rules or precedents to guarantee this. Delegates would have the power to alter anything and everything about the United States government. A convention would likely open up the Constitution to whatever amendments its delegates chose to put forward, regardless of whether the convention is originally called to address a particular issue.

This is extreme, and dangerous. There are no safeguards to prevent a runaway convention that could lead to harmful changes to our founding document, as the Constitution itself puts no authority above a convention – including the courts. Other changes that some would like to see include eliminating birthright citizenship, ending the direct election of senators, restricting free speech, undermining federal taxing authority, limiting access to health care, restricting the role of money in political campaigns, weakening the separation of church and state, and others.

“There is no way to effectively limit or muzzle the actions of a Constitutional Convention. The convention could make its own rules and set its own agenda. Congress might try to limit the convention to one amendment or one issue, but there is no way to assure that the convention would obey.”

**Former Chief Justice
Warren Burger**

“I certainly would not want a constitutional convention. Whoa! Who knows what would come of it?”

**Antonin Scalia, late
Supreme Court Justice**

Kentucky is being targeted. If 34 states pass a resolution calling for a new convention, Congress must convene it. Right now, 28 states have live applications calling for a new convention.

We already have a process to make needed changes to our Constitution, and it's worked well. Since the founding of the country, the constitution has been amended 27 times. Each time, Congress has passed amendments and then the states have ratified them. ***That's democracy.***