

NOTABLE QUOTES



"If a General Convention [called by unanimous consent or by Article V] were to take place for the avowed and sole purpose of revising the Constitution ... an election into it would be courted by the most violent partizans on both sides; it ... would no doubt contain individuals of insidious views, who ... might have a dangerous opportunity of sapping the very foundations of the fabric."

— James Madison, November 2, 1788

"New York has written circular letters to the legislatures to adopt the other mode of amendment, provided also by the constitution that is to say to assemble another federal convention. In this way the whole fabric could be submitted to alteration."

— Thomas Jefferson, December 25, 1788

"I think it would be very foolhardy, it would be a tragic mistake, to hold a constitutional convention for this one purpose. I say it would be foolhardy and dangerous because if we hold a constitutional convention, every group in the country — majority, minority, middle-of-the-road, left, right, up, down — is going to get its two bits in and we are going to wind up with a Constitution that will be so far different from the one we have lived under for 200 years that I doubt that the Republic could continue."

— Senator Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.), February 26, 1979

"Well, constitutional conventions are kind of prescribed as a last resort, because then once it's open, they could take up any number of things."

— President Ronald Reagan, interview with the *Los Angeles Times*, January 20, 1982

"Perhaps, that is, it is time to rewrite our Constitution, written in a language long lost and forgotten, with ideals and expectations too far from the ordinary ken of constitutional readers, in a language we once again understand, with a meaning that is once again our own."

— Lawrence Lessig, May 1993

"I certainly would not want a Constitutional Convention. I mean whoa. Who knows what would come out of that?"

— Justice Antonin Scalia, April 17, 2014

"Article V of the Constitution has only 22 words about a convention for proposing amendments, but the most important is the word 'call.' Since only Congress can 'call' the convention, it means that states have no control over who can be a delegate, who makes the rules, who sets the agenda, or who wields the gavel."

— Phyllis Schlafly, May 23, 2016

"But the U.S. Constitution is not the problem, and an 'Article V Convention' is not the solution.... Make no mistake, the threat of losing our constitutionally protected rights at a convention — which will be attended by powerful, well-financed special interests and establishment insiders — is very real.... There is much to be done to save our ailing Republic and restore liberty, but a convention in our current climate is not the answer."

— Former Representative Ron Paul (R-Texas), September 18, 2017

"Show me a single state where Constitutionalists comprise a majority of the state legislature. At this point in history, an Article V Convention of the States would be a disaster."

— Representative Thomas Massie (R-Ky.), December 9, 2021

"Congress writes the call. And Congress will do more than just a ministerial function.... They could write it to do whatever they want it to do. And if you think that the corrupt insiders in Washington, D.C. are going to let a convention to change and alter the Constitution to make it what people believe will be tighter and restrained, I think you don't understand what's happening in Congress. I'm a big believer that it isn't the Constitution that's the problem, it is the people who ignore the Constitution that usurp power and abuse the constitutional power that they ostensibly have."

— Representative Andy Biggs (R-Ariz.), February 16, 2022

