

# The John Birch Society

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## UNDERSTANDING ARTICLE VI



ARTICLE  
VI

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If an Article V constitutional convention is a terrible idea that could decimate the Constitution, how can we rein in the federal government?

The solution to big government is found in Article VI of the Constitution. In essence, it is the Constitution's enforcement mechanism.

The second clause of Article VI states, in part, "This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof ... shall be the supreme Law of the Land."

This section is clear: Congress or any other branch of government cannot do whatever they want. Every federal action must "be made in Pursuance" of the Constitution. This clearly implies that laws not in accordance with the Constitution are null and void.

Those in favor of an overreaching government often refer to this section as the "Supremacy Clause" and claim that it allows the federal government to do whatever it wants.

This idea defies the foundation our Constitution was built upon. Powers delegated within our Constitution to the federal government are few and defined, and they are specified quite clearly. The federal government does not have the power to do whatever it wants.

Article VI also declares that everyone in any level of government, whether federal, state, or local, "shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution."

In the face of federal overreach, which government official is faithful to his oath: the one who gives in to the overreach or the one who resists? Clearly the latter.

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So, what does this all mean?

First, state and local governments can (and must) nullify every federal action that violates the Constitution. As Article VI requires, these officials are “bound by” oaths to uphold the Constitution, and doing this includes ensuring that the only enforceable laws are those “made in Pursuance thereof.”

Second, voters must elect candidates who are serious about following their oaths and upholding the Constitution. For far too long, We the People have been complacent and allowed our leaders to totally disregard our founding document.

We must hold them accountable by, One: informing others about what the Constitution says and Two: showing them how their elected officials’ records compare. The John Birch Society and our affiliate magazine, The New American, provide multiple tools and resources to help you do just that.

Learn more about Article V and the amendment process by visiting [JBS.org](#).