

April 9, 2018

Dear Legislator:

We, the undersigned Louisiana groups, urge you to support the calling of a properly designed constitutional convention—*We the People's Convention*.

Louisiana is a place like no other. Our culture, traditions and people are second to none. However, we have also struggled for generations with how best to create the consistently reliable government, infrastructure, educational system and economy that meets the need of our people. The time has come to take bold steps intended to rectify this issue and create the Louisiana that finally maximizes our infinite potential.

Decades of experience has shown us that our core, systemic problems cannot be adequately addressed by the normal political, electoral and legislative process.

Our present state constitution is too detailed and prescriptive, an outlier compared to other nearby growing states. It restricts the ability of elected officials to properly maintain an effective budget and governing structure and has helped to create a culture that places far too much dependence on the hallways of the State Capitol for prosperity. Our state constitution is:

- Now 75,000 words—2 1/2 times longer than in 1973, 10 times longer than the U.S. Constitution.
- Amended 189 times in 44 years versus the U.S. Constitution—27 times in 218 years.
- 35 dedicated funds and sub-funds.

But “The People’s Convention” must be truly that, including the following changes to HB 500 (the current constitutional convention bill with the most co-authors):

**1. No pre-ordained, all-powerful drafting and organizing committee.**

Nothing like this was done in 1973. The convention delegates should take their own untainted review rather than follow the direction of a relatively small, unelected group of drafters.

**2. Elect convention delegates.**

The people of Louisiana must drive this effort. Ensuring that an overwhelming percentage of the delegates are elected, rather than appointed, will bring fresh ideas and instill trust in the process.

**3. Use election districts that ensure a diversity of candidates, not mostly elected officials.**

There are several ways to fairly account for balanced citizen input. For example, one idea is for the election of 3 delegates for each Senate district boundary. The goal must be to attract a majority of citizen delegates, not simply recreate large portions of the Legislature.

**4. Adequate scope of the convention, including all important matters.**

It should be bold and not shy away from reviewing important fiscal and structural governmental matters.

This effort may be daunting, but it is an effort that is a long time coming.

With these changes, we believe that, working together, we can help our government better meet the people's needs and provide a better future for all Louisianians.

Sincerely,



