

The General Assembly, because I have not otherwise spelled it out, would have the right to prescribe the form of the petition, period of time for its circulation among the voters, and all other specifics with relation thereto.

I should also state that I feel it should be placed on the ballot at least sixty days after the petition is filed with the office of the governor, although I have not specifically stated that and it can be left to the General Assembly.

For the many reasons stated by Delegate Winslow and others who spoke in support of the initiative procedure with regard to constitutional amendments and for compelling reasons, I think, the calling of a constitutional convention should be subject to popular initiative.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are there any others?

Delegate Boyer.

DELEGATE BOYER: Mr. Chairman, I hate to keep being a dirty bird and oppose my good friends, but again I seriously suggest that the Committee of the Whole reject this amendment. First I am extremely confused. If you follow the amendment on page 1 in line 9 after the period, and add this new sentence, what is it the intention to do with the rest of the Recommendation GP-8? Would all that be scratched or would this be an addition or supplementation or substitution or what? That is one reason I would suggest rejecting this amendment.

Secondly, as Delegate Needle has very properly stated, this is the initiative amendment, exactly the same thing we previously rejected on the amendment section. If anything, I would have much preferred to have initiative on amendment to the constitution rather than calling the convention itself. A special interest group, with a well-heeled financial campaign, could do great chaos to the Free State of Maryland.

I believe for consistency's sake and many other reasons, I would suggest rejection of this Amendment D.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is there any other discussion? Delegate Needle.

DELEGATE NEEDLE: Simply for the purpose of clarification, I did not delete any other portion of the committee recommendation. This is simply a sentence to be added. I do not think it is inconsistent with any other portions of the committee recommendation.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is there any other discussion?

Delegate Grumbacher.

DELEGATE GRUMBACHER: Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, I have been against initiative in every form up until this particular point. The initiative in all other cases is on a specific and single issue which can in times of trouble cause us grave difficulties.

Since in this particular case the initiative would put on the ballot the calling of a convention and through the filter of that convention would pass the problems of the State, I think we would be perfectly safe to have the initiative.

A major reason for having the initiative in here is to avoid the kind of thing we went through for the past hundred years and particularly, I believe, the past fifty, where we have been blocked and blocked very much from having a constitutional convention because of gross malapportionment. We think we may have cured that problem in our present constitution but some things do not stay cured the way you want them to. I think we must have a different form in addition to the way laid out in GP-8, a different way for us to call a convention.

This, I believe, is the soundest. I did not like having the governor call it. I do like very much seeing the initiative being used. This initiative is under tight control of ten percent of the voters, only one-quarter from any one county. It only puts it on the ballot and the ballot then only calls the convention. The convention then acts and it goes back to the people for ratification.

I am heartily in favor of this amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is there any further discussion?

Delegate Wheatley.

DELEGATE WHEATLEY: Mr. Chairman, I have a question for the sponsor of the amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Needle, will you take the floor to yield to questions?

DELEGATE NEEDLE: Surely.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Wheatley.

DELEGATE WHEATLEY: In requiring 10 percent of the total number of votes cast for governor, what time limitation would there be on this?