



**TESTIMONY
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS**

**State Affairs
February 16, 2017**

I am Grace Chimene, testifying as a member and on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Texas. We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments in opposition to SJR 2, which calls for a constitutional convention.

Our position on a constitutional convention, like other League positions, is derived through a lengthy and thoughtful process involving Leagues from across the country and the participation of 25 local Texas leagues spread across Texas.

Our position is specifically concerned that a Constitutional Convention must be limited to a specific topic. It is important to guard against a “runaway convention” which considers multiple issues or topics that were not initiated by the states.

SJR 2 calls for a limit to the jurisdiction of the federal government and is much too broad. Federal powers that have been used to protect minorities and advance civil rights, labor and environmental regulations will be placed at risk.

I have included the entire League position for your consideration:

The League is concerned that there are many unresolved questions about the powers and processes of an Article V Constitutional Convention. The League believes such a convention should be called only if

- a) The Constitutional Convention must be transparent and not conducted in secret. The public has a right to know what is being debated and voted on;
- b) Representation at the Constitutional Convention must be based on population rather than one state, one vote, and delegates should be elected rather than appointed. The delegates represent citizens, should be elected by them, and must be distributed by U.S. population;
- c) Voting at the Constitutional Convention must be by delegate, not by state. Delegates from one state can have varying views and should be able to express them by individual votes;
- d) The Constitutional Convention must be limited to a specific topic. It is important to guard against a “runaway convention” which considers multiple issues or topics that were not initiated by the states;
- e) Only state resolutions on a single topic count when determining if a Constitutional Convention should be called. Counting state requests by topic ensures that there is sufficient interest in a particular subject to call a Convention and enhances citizen interest and participation in the process; and

f) The validity of state calls for an Article V Constitutional Convention must be determined by the most recent action of the state. If a state has enacted a rescission of its call, that rescission must be respected by Congress.

League of Women Voters Constitutional Convention position is available online at:

<http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/league-position-adopted-constitutional-conventions-under-article-v-us-const>

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The League of Women Voters of Texas (LWV-TX) is a nonpartisan citizens' organization that has fought since 1919 to improve our government and engage all citizens in the decisions that impact their lives. It represents more than 5000 members and supporters throughout Texas.

The League of Women Voters never supports or opposes candidates for office or political parties. The member-driven organization of women and men encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and seeks to influence public policy through education and advocacy of positions based on extensive issue study and consensus.