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Written Testimony in SUPPORT of HB1202: Amendments Convention Called Under Article V of the U.S. Constitution – Delegation to the Convention

To the Rules and Executive Nominations Committee

Dear Committee Chair Anne Healey and the Honorable Committee Members,

I appreciate the opportunity to submit written testimony for your consideration on HB1202.

I am Steve Patten, the former state director of the Convention of States in Maryland and a resident of District 42C.

Throughout my engagements with this esteemed committee, I have consistently advocated for the adoption of an Article V Convention of States resolution in Maryland. Such a resolution, upon passage, would align our state with the 19 others calling for a convention aimed at deliberating and proposing amendments to institute term limits, fiscal restraints, and curtail the jurisdiction of the Federal government.

Recognizing the legitimate concerns expressed by members of this General Assembly regarding the feasibility and oversight of such a convention, our group has taken these concerns seriously. Hence, we wholeheartedly support HB1202, which establishes essential standards for the selection, instruction, and supervision of commissioners to represent Maryland at an Article V Convention of States.

As evidenced by the widespread support across 40 states, with 224 Article V convention applications spanning 57 subjects, it is evident that an Article V Convention is not a matter of "if" but "when."

Undoubtedly, you have encountered or voiced objections to the notion of a convention, citing concerns such as the lack of established procedures and the potential for uncontrolled proceedings. HB1202 effectively addresses these apprehensions.

The bill meticulously outlines definitions, qualifications, selection procedures, removal protocols, and safeguards against potential misuse for Maryland's representatives at an Article V Convention. Crucially, it ensures that you, the elected members of the Maryland General Assembly, retain control over the selection of commissioners and hold them accountable.

By preparing Maryland for an Article V Convention, we equip ourselves to participate meaningfully in shaping our nation's future. Even if such a convention is not immediately convened, the responsibility remains for you to appoint commissioners to represent Maryland should the occasion arise.

In closing, I urge you to give careful consideration to the importance of this issue and to support HB1202 to ensure Maryland's readiness for an Article V Convention.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Stephen Patten