



HR1476

LRB095 21868 RLC 52453 r

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21

HOUSE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The question of whether to call a Constitutional Convention will appear as a referendum on the ballot at the general election on November 4, 2008; and

WHEREAS, If called, a Constitutional Convention could propose either an entirely new Constitution or a series of amendments to the existing Constitution; and

WHEREAS, Because there has been uncertainty as to what the cost of such a Convention would be, the citizens of the State have been subjected to the proliferation of wildly excessive, distorted, and inaccurate cost estimates; and

WHEREAS, Public misinformation constitutes an undue distraction for the electorate during a season in which citizens deserve an opportunity for deliberate and conscientious consideration of the merits of this unique and rare referendum; and

WHEREAS, The Legislative Research Unit of the Illinois General Assembly in April 2008, produced a detailed report illustrating that widely-promulgated Convention cost estimates of \$78 million or more are inaccurate because they rely upon a number of dubious assumptions; and

1 WHEREAS, The Legislative Research Unit's own cost
2 estimates indicate that, under one of the three most likely
3 Convention time-frames conceivable, the costs of the
4 Convention might, in fact, very easily be as low as \$14 million
5 dollars; and

6 WHEREAS, The Legislative Research Unit's cost projections
7 are credible insofar as they rely upon the costs of the 1970
8 Convention, adjusted for inflation, along with more recent data
9 about current costs of various commodities necessary for the
10 Convention's operations, and omit figures for extraneous,
11 speculative, or unnecessary costs; and

12 WHEREAS, There is uncertainty as to what the procedures for
13 electing delegates to the Constitutional Convention and for
14 administering the Convention itself would be; and

15 WHEREAS, If a Constitutional Convention is called, the
16 General Assembly must enact a statute setting forth procedures
17 for electing delegates, and for operating and financing the
18 Convention; and

19 WHEREAS, The General Assembly of Illinois enacted a statute
20 in 1969, P.A. 76-40, in anticipation of the last Constitutional
21 Convention that provided a judicious, successful, and model

1 framework for establishing a truly thoughtful and deliberative
2 body uniquely oriented toward promoting the common good through
3 such mechanisms as a cost ceiling on the Convention and the
4 non-partisan election of delegates; therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
6 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that in
7 the event the electors of the State approve the referendum
8 calling for a Constitutional Convention:

9 (1) In light of the findings of the Legislative
10 Research Unit that an efficiently-administered
11 Constitutional Convention fully in keeping with all
12 applicable constitutional requirements could be held for
13 as little as \$14 million dollars, the General Assembly will
14 make all efforts to control and limit the costs of any
15 Constitutional Convention, with a goal of making sure that
16 Convention costs will not exceed an amount equal to
17 approximately one dollar per Illinois citizen, and, in any
18 event, not more than approximately \$15,000,000;

19 (2) Given the Legislative Research Unit's report that
20 under the other two most-conceivable Convention
21 time-frames, the estimated costs of the Convention itself
22 would be either approximately \$17 million or \$23 million,
23 the General Assembly is confident that because there are
24 various plausible low-cost options readily available,
25 budgetary concerns alone should not dissuade citizens from

1 supporting a Convention;

2 (3) The General Assembly should follow the judicious
3 and wise example of the 76th General Assembly by enacting
4 implementation legislation modeled on Public Act 76-40 in
5 1969;

6 (4) All Illinois voters ought to be aware that because
7 a Constitutional Convention would not be under any
8 obligation to draft an entirely new Constitution to replace
9 the Illinois Constitution of 1970, the delegates could
10 instead choose to propose amendments to the existing
11 Constitution to the Illinois electorate; and

12 (5) Any Constitutional Convention should attempt to
13 address endemic problems in Illinois State Government
14 through a set of proposed constitutional amendments
15 addressing topics including, but not limited to:

16 (A) tax fairness, equity, and progressivity;

17 (B) equitable financing of public education; and

18 (C) ethical standards in government.