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Hon. Luke Messer  
United States Congress  
508 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Messer

I was delighted to learn of your decision to introduce a bill to require the Archivist of the United States to collect and render available state legislative applications for a Convention for Proposing Amendments under Article V of the Constitution of the United States.

As you know, besides designating Congress as the legislative arm of the United States Government, the Constitution grants Congress several prerogatives and imposes several duties that are not legislative in nature. These include, but are not limited to, those granted and imposed by Article V of the Constitution. That Article explicitly requires Congress to call a Convention for Proposing Amendments when two thirds of the state legislatures have submitted to Congress applications for such a convention. By necessary implication, Article V requires Congress to tally those applications, correlate them by subject matter, keep track of any state legislative rescissions thereof, and store them appropriately.

Over the course of American history, the state legislatures have submitted hundreds of Article V applications to Congress. They also have submitted many rescissions. As I understand it, however, Congress has never adopted a consistent and workable procedure for receiving or storing those applications and rescissions, or for making them available to the general public, or for otherwise assuring a convention call when two thirds of the state legislatures have applied on matching subject matter.

Your bill fills that gap, and will serve all those purposes well. This measure is particularly important now, when the number of state legislative applications is growing rapidly.

I congratulate you on the introduction of this important legislation, and I hope that Congress will see fit to assure speedy passage.

Very truly yours,

ROBERT G. NATELSON

NOTE: Robert G. Natelson, a former constitutional law professor, is the nation's most published active scholar on the U.S. Constitution's amendment process. He is Senior Fellow in Constitutional Jurisprudence at three policy centers, and the director of the Article V Information Center in Denver. For a biography and bibliography, see <https://www.i2i.org/about/our-people/rob-natelson/>. His works have been cited repeatedly at the U.S. Supreme Court both by justices and by parties.