

Ohio Republicans join push for convention to change U.S. Constitution

By Haley BeMiller
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Ohio Republicans want to impose term limits for federal lawmakers and rein in government spending in Washington.

Their playbook: Pushing for a convention of states to change the U.S. Constitution.

State Reps. Riordan McClain, R-Upper Sandusky, and Bernie Willis, R-Springfield, introduced a plan to apply for a convention under Article V of the Constitution and set rules for the selection of delegates. The proposal is part of a national push among [conservative activists](#) to restrict the government's power and reduce federal debt.

"In 2025, it is not hard to see that the federal government has become too expansive, too intrusive and too unaccountable to the states," McClain told a House committee Tuesday.

New amendments to the U.S. Constitution are rare and historically were passed by Congress, according to the [National Archives Foundation](#).

A convention of states is more complicated. Congress must [call a convention](#) for proposing amendments if 34 states apply – something that's never happened in U.S. history. Any amendments that come out of the convention must then be approved by three-fourths of states.

Willis acknowledged that a convention is a longshot, but he said efforts by Ohio and other states – including [Indiana](#) and [North Carolina](#) – could pressure Congress to listen to their concerns.

Still, [critics worry](#) interest groups could leverage the process to dramatically rewrite the Constitution. While state applications cite specific issues, Article V does not outline rules for the convention

process or require states to limit proposed amendments to the topic at hand.

In addition to term limits and federal spending, Ohio's resolution calls for amendments to "limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government." Common Cause Ohio executive director Catherine Turcer contends that language would give states wide latitude to tinker with any part of the Constitution.

"Most of us would agree that we have serious systemic problems that need to be addressed, but we're in such a highly polarized time," Turcer said. "They're talking about opening up the entire U.S. Constitution."

This wouldn't be the first time Ohio advocated for changes to the constitution.

Lawmakers have applied for a convention seven times since 1788 to address issues ranging from polygamy to the election of senators, according to [Article V Library](#), an online database of state applications. The state's most recent application, submitted in 2013, was in support of a balanced budget amendment.