

How a ‘Convention of States’ Really Works

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“Ignorance lies not in the things you don’t know, but in the things you know that ain’t so.” — Will Rogers

In an **earlier**, widely shared, essay I contended that state legislatures should require Congress to call a “convention of the states.” Article V of the Constitution empowers such a convention to propose constitutional amendments to correct federal dysfunction. Any proposals would have to be ratified by three-fourths of the states (38 of 50).

The Constitution’s framers added the convention mechanism to allow states to bypass Congress and amend the Constitution if the federal government abused or exceeded its powers.