



CALIFORNIA REPUBLIC

CALIFORNIA CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

CALIFORNIA IN CRISIS

- ✘ Our Premise: California is broken. That point is not longer debatable. The question is how to fix it.



BUDGET CRISIS



HEALTHCARE CRISIS



WATER CRISIS



EDUCATION CRISIS



PRISON CRISIS



IDEOLOGICALLY EXTREME LEGISLATORS



IN SPITE OF DISAPPROVAL RATINGS, PROBLEM IS NOT THE PEOPLE, IT'S THE SYSTEM

- ✘ If you “throw the bums out” the next set of bums will have the same problems.



CALIFORNIA IS BROKEN – REFORM IS DESPERATELY NEEDED

- ✘ Question: What vehicle gets us the reforms we need in the shortest time? And, is politically viable?



OUR PROPOSAL:

CITIZEN-AUTHORIZED CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION



WHY?

- ✘ Legislature can't act.
- ✘ Incrementalism doesn't respect the crisis we are in.
- ✘ We need a big package of reforms – only possible through constitutional “revisions.”
 - + Due to “single-subject” rule.
 - + Revisions only come from the Legislature or a Constitutional Convention.

HOW DOES CALIFORNIA GET THERE?

× Current Rules

- + 2/3rds vote of the Legislature putting question of Convention on ballot.
- + 50% plus one vote of the people at next general election.
- + Legislature “provides” for Convention.
 - × In 1933, Legislature refused to “provide.”

HOW DID CALIFORNIA GET THERE?

- ✗ First constitution written in 1849
- ✗ Constitutional Convention in 1878-1879
 - + Produced current document
- ✗ 1933 voters called Convention but legislature did not provide
- ✗ 1960's-1970's: Constitutional Revision Commission shrinks size of document but no big changes
- ✗ 1990's: Constitutional Revision Commission proposes changes that get nowhere.
- ✗ Today?

HOW DOES CALIFORNIA GET THERE?

- × A new way
 - + Proposition 1: Amend Constitution to allow the people to call a Constitutional Convention
 - + Proposition 2:
 - × Call Convention
 - × Delegate selection process
 - × Limit issues to be covered in Convention
 - × Set start and finish date

DETAILS

- ✘ Delegate selection
 - + Direct election in existing districts
 - + Proposition 11 “apply and filter” approach
 - + Jury pool selection
- ✘ Each informed by panel of experts

- ✘ Strengths and weaknesses of each?

DETAILS

- ✘ Issues covered – consensus to date, but more input needed.
 - + Budget Reform
 - + Election Reform
 - + State-local fiscal relationship reform
 - + Government oversight mechanism

DETAILS

- + Moderating forces on a Convention.
 - × Delegates not beholden to interest groups.
 - × Public will follow process from start to finish – unlike other initiatives.
 - × Whatever delegates propose must be approved by the people.

DETAILS

- ✘ Delegates paid?
 - + Likely, yes, same pay as Assembly and Senate members.
- ✘ Length of Convention?
 - + 30 year average is 2.6 months
- ✘ Other states have conventions?
 - + Yes, lots of states have had conventions
 - + 14 states automatically ask for a convention every 10-20 years

WHAT DO YOU THINK?



THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION SUMMIT

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

9:00 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.

Sheraton Grand Hotel

Sacramento, California



You Are Invited

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