

July 8, 2024

Dear Samuel Zurier,

In November, voters will be asked whether or not the State should hold a constitutional convention. We are building a diverse statewide coalition of individuals and organizations who are uniting to oppose this ballot measure and to urge a “no” vote in November on the calling of a convention. These member organizations and individuals are united in opposing a constitutional convention by these shared beliefs:

- We Must Protect Our Civil Rights

- Approval of a constitutional convention is a significant threat to our civil rights. Across the country, efforts to undermine affirmative action, reproductive rights, LGBTQ+ rights, worker rights, and immigrant rights have become fodder for expensive statewide campaigns mounted by well-funded, out-of-state special interests.

- Our Constitution is Not For Sale

- The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that there can be no government limits on how much money corporations spend on referenda campaigns, including proposed constitutional amendments that come out of a convention. We now live in a world of unfettered special interest spending and out-of-state money that distorts campaigns.

- We Already Have Effective Means of Changing Governance

- Rhode Island does not need a constitutional convention to change our governance. Constitutional changes on critical issues like separation of powers and voting rights may be done, and have been done in the past, by questions placed on the ballot by the General Assembly.

- Our Money Is Better Spent Elsewhere

- Constitutional conventions are expensive. In past years, the bipartisan preparatory commission has estimated the cost to be more than \$2 million. That estimate is sure to be significantly higher when the new estimates are prepared for a convention this year. There are much better uses and services where that money could be spent.

While our opponents claim a Constitutional Convention could improve our governmental structure, a constitutional convention is more likely to serve as a vehicle for socially divisive amendments. In fact, in 1986 at our last Convention in Rhode Island, the major constitutional amendment that arose was a proposal declaring that life begins at conception. Passage of a constitutional convention is likely to lead to disastrous results for causes that our coalition believes in. We urge you to join us in not only opposing this ballot measure in November, but helping us raise awareness of this significant threat to our rights and liberties. If you have any questions or concerns about this issue, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,



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