

EXPLANATION 2

EXPLANATION FOR QUESTION 2:

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

PURPOSE AND EXPLANATION: What would approval of this question do?

The General Assembly has submitted the following question to the State's voters:

Shall there be a convention to amend or revise the Constitution?

A vote to "Approve" means you would like to see a Constitutional Convention called to amend or revise the Constitution.

A vote to "Reject" means that you are opposed to holding a Constitutional Convention at this time.

A Constitutional Convention is an assembly of delegates or representatives of the people of the State for the purpose of amending or revising the State's Constitution. A Constitutional Convention, if held, could propose an entirely new Constitution for adoption or rejection by the voters; it could propose individual amendments to the Constitution; or it could re-write the basic document while presenting what appears to be the most controversial issues to the voters in the form of supplemental amendments, thus allowing individual decisions on each.

No amendment or revision to the Constitution agreed upon by a Constitutional Convention shall take effect until the amendments or revisions have been submitted to the voters of the State and approved by a majority of those voting.

A bi-partisan preparatory commission was created by the General Assembly to assemble information on constitutional questions for the voters of the State. The preparatory commission conducted extensive hearings throughout the State and received public comment on a broad range of issues. The preparatory commission, after gathering information on particular issues that voters may consider, has issued a report with its findings but has not taken a position on particular issues.

The parameters of a Constitutional Convention would be decided by the General Assembly and the elected delegates to the Convention. The last Constitutional Convention was in 1985. The preparatory commission reported that the projected cost to the taxpayers of the State of a similarly conducted Convention in 2006 would be approximately \$2,000,000, after adjusting 1985 costs for inflation.

A copy of the complete report issued by the bi-partisan preparatory commission presenting its findings may be viewed on the website of the Rhode Island General Assembly (www.rilin.state.ri.us) or a copy of the report may be obtained from the Rhode Island State Library, State House Room 208, Providence, RI 02903.

If a majority of the voters vote to hold a Constitutional Convention, then it will be the responsibility of the 2005 General Assembly to enact legislation determining the method of election of delegates, setting forth an election schedule, and appropriating funds for the convention to function. The number of delegates shall be equal to the number of members of the House of Representatives and shall be apportioned in the same manner as the members of the House of Representatives.

This question has been proposed by the General Assembly of the State pursuant to Article XIV, Section 2 of the Constitution of Rhode Island, which gives the General Assembly the right to submit to the voters at any election the question, "Shall there be a convention to amend or revise the Constitution?"

HOW MUCH MONEY WILL BE BORROWED?

The referendum would not authorize any borrowing.