

# Explanation of Constitutional Amendments and Statewide Questions

November 6, 1984

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## 1. Constitutional Convention

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

### Call of Constitutional Convention

The Secretary of State has placed the question of the calling of the Constitutional Convention on the ballot, pursuant to Section 2 of Article 42 of the State Constitution that provides that, if the question of calling a Constitutional Convention is not submitted by the General Assembly to the voters during any ten-year period, the Secretary of State must submit it to the voters at the next general election.

If a majority of the voters vote to hold a Constitutional Convention, then it will be the responsibility of the 1985 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 General Assembly, at its 1983 session, created a bi-partisan commission to assemble information on constitutional questions for the electors. That Commission, which reported July 5, 1984, recommended that the voters vote for a Constitutional Convention at the 1984 General Election and further, if a Constitutional Convention is to be held, that the delegates be elected on a non-partisan basis.

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.

The Commission did not take a position on particular issues; it did recommend that the voters should consider, among others, the following issues: four-year terms for the state's General Officers and Legislators, legislative pay, the size of both houses of the General Assembly, reapportionment of the General Assembly, equal rights, initiative, referendum, and the tenure and selection of Supreme Court Justices.