

## Mark Welch

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**From:** Michael Narducci  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 14, 2014 11:43 AM  
**To:** Mark Welch; John Fleming  
**Subject:** Emailing: Ballot Questions 2014  
**Attachments:** Ballot Questions 2014.DOCX

Mark,  
Attached are the final questions and explanations that will appear in the referenda guide.

## EXPLANATION 3

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### EXPLANATION FOR QUESTION 3:

#### CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

##### PURPOSE AND EXPLANATION: WHAT WOULD APPROVAL OF THIS QUESTION DO?

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

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

A Constitutional Convention is an assembly of delegates or representatives of the people of the State for the purpose of amending or revising the Rhode Island Constitution. A Constitutional Convention, if held, could propose an entirely new Constitution for adoption or rejection by the State's electors; 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 electors 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 electors of the State and approved by a majority of those electors voting.

In accordance with Section 2 of Article XIV of the Rhode Island Constitution, a bipartisan preparatory commission has been created by the General Assembly to assemble information on constitutional questions for the electors of the State. The preparatory commission may make use of such sources and means of gathering information pertinent to the fulfillment of its charge as it may deem appropriate. The preparatory commission, after gathering information on particular issues that the State's electors may consider, shall report its findings to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President of the Senate, and to the public, through the news media.

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 held in 1985. It is unknown at this time what would be the cost to the taxpayers of the State to conduct a Constitutional Convention if this referendum question is approved by a majority of the electors of the State voting. However, the preparatory commission for the proposed Constitutional Convention submitted by referendum to the electors of the State in 2004, which was not approved, reported that the projected cost to the taxpayers of the State of a Constitutional Convention in 2006 that would be similar to the last Constitutional Convention held in 1985 would be approximately \$2,000,000, after adjusting 1985 costs for inflation.

If a majority of the State's electors vote to hold a Constitutional Convention, then it will be the responsibility of the 2015 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 Section 2 of Article XIV of the Rhode Island Constitution, which gives the General Assembly the right to submit to the electors at any election the question, "Shall there be a convention to amend or revise the Constitution?" If the General Assembly fails to submit the question to the electors of the State during any ten year period, then the Secretary of State shall submit it at the next general election following such period.

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 a Constitutional Convention called to amend or revise the Constitution at this time.

**HOW MUCH MONEY WILL BE BORROWED?**

The referendum would not authorize any borrowing.