

## LR 6 OPPOSITION TALKING POINTS

1. **No rules exist to govern an Article V convention.** While the provision allowing the call of a constitutional convention exists in the US Constitution, that same provision provides no guidance on how one is governed. Once a convention is called the convention can set its own agenda and there is no constitutional or legal precedent that allows states to limit the scope of a convention. The last “limited” convention was in 1781 when the founding fathers threw out the Articles of Confederation despite the convention being called for the limited scope to provide taxing authority.
2. **The scope of an Article V convention cannot be limited.** The inability to limit the scope of a constitutional convention threatens all civil rights protect by the Bill of Rights. Freedom of speech, freedom of religion, the right to bear arms, and voting rights would be open to elimination or alterations that could change the face of our democracy.
3. **LR 6 could have real implications on Nebraska’s budget.** While proponents of a constitutional convention tout the supposed safeguards and unlikely occurrence of a runaway convention, the consequences of a constitutional convention are real for Nebraska’s budget. On average, federal dollars account for over 30% of revenue in Nebraska, reaching 35% in the most recent recession.<sup>1</sup>
4. **Rural communities directly benefit from federal dollars.** In 2011, Nebraska received over \$31.6 million federal dollars to invest in our rural schools, hospitals, and communities to increase broadband access – a key to success for new business and quality of life.<sup>2</sup>
5. **Cutting off federal funds will hurt Nebraska’s senior citizens.** In 2013, the largest chunks of federal spending in Nebraska were social security retirement benefits and Medicare, an estimated \$4.67 billion and \$2.8 billion dollars, respectively.<sup>3</sup> Over 250,000 Nebraskans are over the age of 65<sup>4</sup> and rely on these programs. LR 6 proposes upheaving these vital programs, putting America’s greatest generation in jeopardy.

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<sup>1</sup> National Priorities, State Smart: Federal Funds in Nebraska

<sup>2</sup> Congressional Research Service, *Distribution of Broadband Stimulus Grants and Loans: Applications and*

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<sup>3</sup> Pew Charitable Trust, “Federal Spending in the State”, State-by-State Distribution

<sup>4</sup> Nebraska Blue Book, “The People”, pages 42-44.

6. **A constitutional convention threatens the finances and well-being of individual Nebraskans.** In 2014, over \$9.9 billion of federal dollars were paid directly to Nebraskans through programs like Medicare, Medicaid, SNAP, TANF, and veteran benefits – an average of \$5,286 per Nebraskan. If the purpose of this convention is carried out, Nebraskans could lose those federal dollars.
  
7. **Federal funding is necessary to building infrastructure.** In 2015 Congress voted to send \$1.5 billion dollars for highway spending to Nebraska. A constitutional convention aimed at restricting federal spending would put future infrastructure funding in jeopardy – a chance we can't take with aging roads and crumbling bridges.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Omaha World Herald, Midland Voices: Highway bill puts Nebraska, nation on right road, published 12/6/2015.