



Senate of Pennsylvania

Senator Jim Ferlo

38th Senatorial District

MEMO

Date: *January , 2011*
To: *All Senators*
From: *Senator Jim Ferlo*
Subject: *Co-sponsorship of Constitutional Convention Legislation*

Dear Colleagues:

In the near future I plan to re-introduce SB 455 from the previous session that will call for a constitutional convention with limited powers. If the bill passes quickly it would allow for a referendum in the primary of 2011 that will ask voters if they want a constitutional convention to take place to revise the following sections:

Article II – The Legislature

Section 4 (Sessions) – For the discussion of prohibiting lame duck sessions after November elections.

Section 8 (Compensation) – For the discussion of prohibiting of unvouchered expenses.

Section 16 (Legislative Districts) – For the discussion of reducing the size of the legislature.

Article III -- Legislation

Section 4 (Consideration of Bills) – For the discussion of a more public and open process for passing legislation and amendments to bills.

Section 13 (Vote Denied Members with Personal Interest) – For discussion of strengthening the language

Section 26 (Extra Compensation Prohibited; Claims Against the Commonwealth; Pensions) – For further discussion of compensation.

Article V – Judiciary

Section 16 (Compensation and Retirement of Justices, Judges and Justices of the Peace)

– For discussion of judicial pay raises.

If the referendum is approved a convention would be formed of three delegates from each Senate district as well as the Lieutenant Governor, and the top three leaders from each of the four caucuses. The three delegates from each Senate district would be elected at the November 2011 election. The convention will begin on December 1, 2011 with sine die adjournment occurring on Feb. 28th. The convention will make recommendations and frame the ballot questions to be voted on at the primary in 2012 by the state's electors.

While I am myself not a proponent of some measures that may arise from such a constitutional convention, I believe the events of the last two years have shown that we need to revisit and strengthen our state's most important document to help once again restore faith in our legislature and government.

In the previous session SB 455 was co-sponsored by Senators Fontana, O'Pake, Pippy, Earll, Browne, Brubaker, and Boscola.

If you would like to co-sponsor this legislation please e-mail Gianna Veno at gveno@pasenate.com or call 787-6123.