

Talking Points: Constitutional Amendment/Convention

Opposing Constitutional Amendments and Conventions

What is a constitutional amendment?

The purpose of a constitutional amendment is to amend a portion of an existing constitution. Constitutional amendments go before the voting public for approval.

What is a constitutional convention?

The purpose of a constitutional convention is to either write a new constitution or reform / revise an existing constitution. Delegates are appointed to review or rewrite the constitution.

Why do we **OPPOSE** a constitutional amendment/convention?

- Per Article X, Section 29 (A), the Louisiana Constitution guarantees lifetime retirement benefits to TRSL retirees. The state constitution has included this guarantee since 1973. A constitutional amendment or convention has the potential to remove this guarantee. Therefore, the state would no longer be required to pay retired teachers pensions (that they EARNED).
- A constitutional amendment or convention could also remove budgetary protections from other areas of the constitution, such as education funding. Inadequate or inconsistent funding would affect the school systems' ability to pay the employer's cost to the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL).
- As the voice for the retired education community, LRTA opposes any legislative action that would negatively affect retired teachers and/or their pensions.
- The state can amend the constitutional convention through legislation.

Bottom Line

- A constitutional amendment/convention **could** affect your retirement benefits. If the constitutional guarantee of lifetime benefits is removed, the state would not be required to pay public pensions.
- Removing budgetary protections from other areas of the constitution can affect our retirement system.

Start talking to your state Representatives and Senators NOW. They need to know about the issues that affect their constituents. To find your Representatives' and Senators' contact information, see the attachment or go to <http://www.legis.la.gov/legis/FindMyLegislators.aspx>.