



# National Archives and Records Administration

700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20408-0001

March 12, 2007

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The Honorable Bernard Sanders  
United States Senate  
1 Church Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Burlington, VT 05401

Dear Senator Sanders:

Thank you for your inquiry of February 28, 2007, on behalf of Mr. Steve Moyer, who seeks information on petitions sent to Congress seeking amendments to the Constitution – by the convention process.

Of Mr. Moyer's three questions, the easiest to answer in his third. Access to House and Senate records at the National Archives is governed for the House by Rule VII and for the Senate by Senate Resolution 474 (96<sup>th</sup> Congress). These can be seen on the Center's web site at <http://www.archives.gov/legislative/research/house-rule-vii.html> and <http://www.archives.gov/legislative/research/senate-resolution-474.html>. The former explicitly has a section on "Archiving."

The Center for Legislative Archives probably holds the kind of petitions in which Mr. Moyer is interested. Researchers who are able to pinpoint file citations can request electrostatic copies of House and Senate records held by the Center. The charge is 50 cents per page, with minimum mail orders of \$10.00.

Unfortunately there is no single category for petitions asking for amendments to the Constitution, let alone for amendments by the convention route.

The Center has much better intellectual control over House records than over Senate records. For House records, 1789-1946, there is a 587-page Preliminary Inventory. In the back of that volume there is an index. For Constitution-Amendment-of-Petitions, there are listings on pages 84, 106, 111, 165, 167, 173, 180, 194, 201, 207, 253, 254, 260, 261, 268, 276, 284, 290, 324, 333, 334, 354, 360, 367, 382, 387, 392, 397, 408, 413, 420, 431 and 437.

For a particular file category, one would then need to go to the page in question. For page 84, from the 24<sup>th</sup> Congress (1833-1835) under "Other select committees," there's something for HR 24A-G22.1. For page 437, from the 79<sup>th</sup> Congress (1945-1946), under petitions referred to the Committee on the Judiciary there is a category for "constitutional amendments" under HR79A-H9.6.

Regretfully, all such categories are for the generic request for amending the Constitution. Each individual petition, within each category, would need to be read to see if a particular document mentioned the convention process.