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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Members of the House of Representatives

**FROM:** Representative Scott Conklin

**DATE:** December 14, 2010

**SUBJECT:** Co-sponsorship Legislation - "Citizens Constitutional Convention Act"

In the near future, I plan to introduce legislation creating the 'Citizens Constitutional Convention Act of 2011' calling for a Citizens Constitutional Convention with a referendum to be voted on by the people of this great Commonwealth on November 8, 2011.

The argument for calling a state constitutional convention is very clear and convincing. It's been more than 130 years since the last time Pennsylvania's entire Constitution was proposed for revision. One cannot imagine a company conducting over \$50 billion worth of business and employing 55 thousand workers without routinely reviewing and updating its strategic plan. Although Pennsylvania's last state convention was in 1967, it was limited in scope, and the Commonwealth has not developed a new plan much less updated its old one since 1873. The last time the Commonwealth took a comprehensive look at its constitution, Ulysses Grant was in the White House, Queen Victoria reigned in Britain, and the Wright Brothers' first flight was still three decades in the future. In short, Pennsylvania's constitution is a legal fossil unequipped to deal with the issues and problems of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The following delineates the main points of this legislation:

- Convention would be broad in scope;
- A question of conducting a Constitutional Convention and what articles would be affected would be submitted to the electorate at the November 8, 2011 General Election;
- Elected delegates would receive a salary equal to legislative base pay and reimbursement for mileage and lodging;
- Elected delegates would be prohibited from serving as a public official for a period of two years after their term of service expired;

- Convention would open on April 2, 2012 to elect officers and form committees;
- Lobbying of individual delegates by registered lobbyists would be prohibited; permitted lobbying methods of the whole convention would be specified;
- Proposed changes to the Constitution will require a 2/3 majority upon final passage at the convention;
- Proposed constitutional changes would be submitted to the electorate during the November 6, 2012 General Election;
- New Constitution would be immune from subsequent state court challenges; and
- The Convention would be funded with an appropriation of \$20 million from all four caucuses from non-lapsing legislative leadership accounts.

A Citizens Constitutional Convention is the most important reform this Commonwealth could undertake. It fulfills the self-governance prophecy upon which this country was built, “government of the people, by the people, for the people”.

If you would like to join me in co-sponsoring this important piece of legislation, please contact Patricia McMillan in my office (717) 787-9473 or [pmmcilla@pahouse.net](mailto:pmmcilla@pahouse.net).