



Constitutional Revision in Missouri: The Convention of 1943-1944

Published on *Show-Me Institute* (<https://showmeinstitute.org>)



In November 2022, Missourians will vote on a referendum asking whether to revise and amend our constitution. Our current constitution was adopted in 1945. Since then it has been amended over 110 times and has grown to nearly 80,000 words—nearly three times the length of the document ratified in 1945. Many commentators have called for revision and modernization of the constitution, but voters have consistently rejected the calling of a new constitutional convention. What would it take to convince voters that a revision of our state’s foundational document is in the public’s best interest? And, should a convention be called, what would it take for the convention to be successful?

This essay (also available [here](#)) addresses those questions through a thorough examination of the constitutional convention of 1943–44 starting with the campaign to win public support for the convention itself; continuing through the selection of delegates, establishment of procedural rules, and consideration and adoption of proposals; and concluding with the election in February 1945 in which our current constitution was ratified. Despite a different political climate and changes in the issues that matter most to Missourians, there are lessons to be taken from the 1943–1944 constitutional convention for anyone interested in the possibility of a constitutional overhaul in 2022.

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About the Author



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