



PRESS RELEASE

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PAR Statement on a Proposed Constitutional Convention

The Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana believes the state needs constitutional reform after years of cluttering Louisiana’s primary governing document with hundreds of amendments and provisions best left to statute.

The Louisiana Constitution has become a bulky, restrictive document that limits the flexibility of elected and appointed officials to make decisions about government operations and finances as circumstances change. The document has ballooned to more than 83,000 words – nearly 11 times longer than the U.S. Constitution and one of the longest constitutions in the country.

PAR would like to see a reworked Louisiana Constitution that is [limited to the general principles](#) that outline the rights of the state’s citizens and provide a basic framework for the scope and operation of government.

The current document is so jam-packed with detail and restrictions that it requires constant revision to meet state needs. Lawmakers seeking to make simple budget decisions often must return to voters with repeated amendments to achieve those aims. Since voters ratified the Louisiana Constitution in 1974, lawmakers have asked them to decide 316 amendments, a number that grows nearly every year.

That isn’t good government.

While seeking reform, PAR hasn’t advocated for a specific path to achieve that goal, whether it be a constitutional convention, a package of amendments to remove language from the constitution or an article-by-article rewrite through the amendment process. However, the governor and legislative leaders are proposing a constitutional convention, and PAR is supportive of the idea if the convention stays focused on a singular goal: Simplifying the Louisiana Constitution.

PAR shares concerns about the speed of such an effort. But if a convention’s aim is solely to focus on decisions about streamlining the constitution, such work likely could be achieved in a shorter time than a broad rewrite. PAR has started the work with a [deep dive into state spending, taxation and special funds](#) that makes recommendations for reform.

If two-thirds of the House and Senate choose to hold a constitutional convention, PAR urges lawmakers to ensure the convention gives the public a right to participate and offer its recommendations. Constitutional reform can only be achieved if Louisiana’s citizens support the work and feel included in the process.