

A Convention of States could provide solutions for America

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By [Randy W. Bright](#)

Last week I discussed how the federal government is exerting a great deal of influence, pressure and power over local governments to achieve the goals of those in the federal government. In particular, I was referring to the drive toward high-density development, eventually at the demise of the kind of development that the vast majority Americans have shown preference for, the suburbs.

I should reiterate here that I have nothing against high-density development per se. It is a valid lifestyle for some Americans, and if developers want to provide that kind of living arrangement to satisfy that need, then they should be free to do so. What I am against is the creation of a system whereby the only kind of development that will be allowed is high-density.

As is often the case, and is becoming the rule, the federal government holds too much power over state and local governments. Taxation transfers enormous wealth from ordinary citizens to the federal government, who can then hold those funds hostage against state and local governments who desperately need those funds for any number of reasons. There are few states or municipalities, if any, that can provide the funding for infrastructure without assistance from the federal government.

And even if they could, for example, what if a state highway passes through a city that doesn't want to take federal funds and has the funds to maintain the highway? They can't, because the highway doesn't belong to them, giving the federal government another way to pressure them into doing things according to the will of federal bureaucrats. Don't want to agree to federal rules? Potholes.

The founders never intended for states and municipalities to be so dependent or under the control of the federal government. States were to be sovereign, with the duties of the federal government being restricted to a limited number of enumerated powers.

Frederic Bastiat (1801-1850), wrote in his book *The Law*, that when the law "has exceeded its proper functions, it has not done so merely in some inconsequential and debatable matters.

The law has gone further than this; it has acted in direct opposition to its own proper purpose. The law has been used to destroy its own objective: It has been applied to annihilating the justice that it was supposed to maintain; to limiting and destroying rights which its real appeal was to respect. The law has placed the collective force at the disposal of the unscrupulous who wish, without risk, to exploit the person, liberty, and property of others. It has converted plunder into a right, in order to protect plunder. And it has converted lawful defense into a crime, in order to punish lawful defense."

And so we see exactly what Bastiat wrote about appearing before our own eyes. The tragedy is that the policies being forced upon us by the federal government will deter us from making real

progress in resolving poverty, crime, and a myriad of other social ills. If that were not true, we would not see 93 million Americans without jobs, and some 50 million on food stamps.

The solution to this particular problem is to take control away from the federal government and give it back to the states where it belongs, and the means to that is to hold a Convention of States.

A Convention of States is not, by the way, the same as a Constitutional Convention, which I won't go into here; however, our Constitution gives us a means to correct a runaway federal government with Article V, whose purpose is to provide for the proposal of specific amendments to the Constitution.

A Convention of States can be called if two-thirds (34) of states submit an application to do so, and there is no Constitutional provision that would legally allow Congress to stop it.

Article V was placed in our Constitution at the proposal of one of the Framers, George Mason, who believed that the draft of the Constitution gave Congress too much power over the amendment process.

Once the Convention is called, delegates or "commissioners" are chosen by each state to participate in the Convention. The commissioners propose and vote on amendments, requiring a majority of the states (who regardless of the number of delegates they provide, gets one vote each); when passed, the amendment then goes to the states - not Washington - for ratification.

This is how we can get our federal government under control, and I would urge my readers to go to the conventionofstates.com website to learn more about it.

It is vitally necessary if we are to preserve our rights and provide for the progress of our nation.



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