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Alaska Miners Association Statement in Opposition to Constitutional Convention

Article XIII Section 3 of the Alaska Constitution provides that if during any ten-year period a constitutional convention has not been held, the Lieutenant Governor shall place on the ballot for the next general election the question: "Shall there be a Constitutional Convention?" Every time in our history, Alaskan voters have rejected the proposal.

AMA believes that Alaska's original Constitutional Convention delegates drafted one of the strongest state Constitutions in the nation and it has served our state well for the last 60 years. For instances in which there may be a need to change our Constitution, Article 13, Section 1 provides that can be accomplished through an existing targeted and transparent amendment process, including ratification by a public vote. This process for amendments has been used 40 times, 28 times successfully.

Article XIII, Section 4 of the Alaska Constitution gives plenary power to a constitutional convention to amend or revise the constitution, which could result in an indiscriminate rewriting of the document with unpredictable and unintended consequences. With no requirement governing the selection of delegates, it is unknown who would hold the immense lawmaking authority at a Convention. This could bring an unprecedented amount of outside special interests and funding to influence the required election of Convention delegates, creating an opportunity to influence the drafting of the new constitution to promote special interest agendas.

The uncertainty around a Convention would put in jeopardy the principles related to our natural resources of common use, equal access, sustained yield, public domain, access to fisheries, mineral and water rights, and access to navigable waters, leaving citizens to wonder which existing rights will be changed or eliminated. This would create years of economic, legal and regulatory uncertainty, and would inhibit or prevent investment in Alaska industries.

Additionally, a Convention brings a significant financial impact: it is estimated to include 165 days of personnel support with a budget of nearly \$17 million.

For these reasons, AMA opposes the establishment of a new Constitutional Convention as unnecessary, expensive and dangerous, with the risks outweighing the rewards. AMA will encourage its members and the public to oppose the question on the November 8, 2022 ballot.