

*Unlike most states, the 1901 Constitution requires taxes on food and non-prescription drugs. The new 2006 law that requires a family of four to pay income taxes if they earn \$12,600 or more a year, raised the threshold; but it is still one of the lowest thresholds in the nation.*

**Will the transition to a new Constitution work without chaos?**

All previous amendments will likely become local laws. A schedule is usually included in a constitution to lay out a smooth transition. Many states including Alabama have done this before.

Alabama has written 6 constitutions. We have done this before and we can do it again!

ACCR's Boards include many well known citizens of Alabama including:

**Former Governor, Albert Brewer**  
**Retired Pres. Samford Univ. Dr. Thomas Corts**  
**Exec. Dir., GBM, Scott Douglas**  
**Former US Congressman, Jack Edwards**  
**Attorney, Lenora Pate**  
**Prof., Auburn Univ., Dr. Wayne Flynt**  
**Former Sec. of State, Jim Bennett**

[www.constituionalreform.org](http://www.constituionalreform.org).  
Phone 205- 540-7501

Provided by Alabama Citizens for  
Constitutional Reform  
2008

**1. The most important thing you can do is to contact your state legislators** and tell them you want them to vote to allow the citizens to vote for or against holding a citizen's convention. **Go and talk with your legislator or send letters or e-mails. Ask others to do the same. Form Legislative Action Teams in your district and get involved and recruit others.**

**2. Find your Legislators**

[www.legislature.state.al.us](http://www.legislature.state.al.us) or call your local library or call us at ACCR: 205 540-7501

**3. Help educate your friends** and neighbors about the need for a new constitution Make copies of this pamphlet and pass it out to everyone.

**4. Contact Greater Birmingham Ministries** [www.GBM.org](http://www.GBM.org) for educational materials and events.

**5. Join ACCR today!** Go to our Website: [www.constitutionalreform.org](http://www.constitutionalreform.org) Become part of our network of informed active citizens. Or send a check for \$15.00 to ACCR Inc. and mail it to

ACCR Inc.  
P.O. Box 10746  
Birmingham, AL 35202

**2008 NEW YEAR  
NEW CHANCE TO  
LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD**



**LET YOUR LEGISLATORS  
KNOW YOU WANT THEM TO  
ALLOW THE PEOPLE TO VOTE  
ON HOLDING A  
CONSTITUTIONAL  
CONVENTION**

**UPDATE:**

**House Speaker Pro Tem Demetrius Newton has sponsored HB 308 along with 18 co-sponsors and Senator Ted Little has introduced SB 243 along with 15 co-sponsors. All of these co-sponsors come from both sides of the aisle and represent the largest number of co-sponsors on constitutional convention bills ever before.**

## **WHY ? Our 1901 Alabama Constitution:**

**\*Restricts the power of local governments to decide what is best for their local residents.**

**\*Requires legislators to write amendments** to solve local problems. This can override the desire of the local people affected.

**\*Centralizes power in Montgomery**, restricts local governments and restricts the peoples participation in their government. This shows distrust of the people by promoting the notion that the Legislature knows best and must take care of the people.

**\*Restricts** economic development by requiring amendments to promote recruitment of new businesses.

**\*Promotes racism.** The Constitution contains racist language and racist policies and was written as a document that prevented African Americans and poor blacks from voting.

**\*Burdens the people** because it is so long, confusing and cumbersome that lawyers must be involved in many interpretations for simple matters. The complexity is a barrier to good government and participation by the people.

## **The Constitution can be changed two ways:**

**1. Article by article:** the Legislature can rewrite an article and the people must then vote to approve yet another amendment *But the Legislature has changed only one article in 107 years* OR

**2. A constitutional convention:** The Legislature can approve a bill that will call for a constitutional convention. Then the people can vote to approve that bill and elect citizens to write a new constitution. The people must approve or reject the new constitution or parts of it.

The majority of citizens want a convention to rewrite the constitution according to a statewide poll conducted in the spring of 2006.

## **What should a Constitution include?**

**\*It should reflect faith in the people and not deny people the right to decide local matters**

**\*It should call on the guidance of Almighty God** as does the 1901 Constitution and be the fundamental law of, for, and by the People.

## **Who would write the new constitution? Local elected citizens.**

A bill calling for a citizen's convention to write a new constitution for Alabama would provide for a non-partisan delegate election.

The bill may allow voters to elect two citizen delegates from their House District, for a total of 210. These may be community and business leaders, teachers, scholars, ministers, doctors. These House districts have been previously approved as providing fair representation under federal law

## **But what about special interest groups?**

Special Interest groups would have less influence on delegates than they now have on

elected officials because political contributions to delegates would be limited. Citizens would elect those they trust to be delegates. All delegates will represent interests of *some* type. But all delegates will have to create a document that will balance all of their interests against the interests of the other delegates for the good of Alabama. And in the end, the delegates will understand that whatever they write will have to be accepted or rejected by the citizens' vote.

Also, delegates will run only once, so they will not have to make promises to guarantee re-election, and the rules of running as a delegate will likely have strict limits on campaign financing.

## **How will the delegates know what kind of a constitution would be best for Alabama?**

They will have copies of existing constitutions to use as guides. The Preamble and some of the existing Articles could be retained and constitutional scholars could serve as advisors. Seminars could be provided for delegates. **They could propose a complete constitution or parts of a constitution for voters to approve or reject.**

## **But what about TAXES?**

The cry that "a new Constitution will raise taxes" is untrue. This is fear of trusting the people.

**Alabamians are so reluctant to accept new taxes, that delegates are not likely to recommend tax increases in a new constitution and then expect their fellow Alabamians to approve it.**