

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS:**  
**RELEVANT LAWS**

**Joint Rules of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Eighty-Ninth General Assembly, SCR 1.**

Joint Committee on Constitutional Amendments

Section 21. The Joint Committee on Constitutional Amendments shall consist of the members of the Senate Committee on State Agencies and Governmental Affairs and the members of the House Committee on State Agencies and Governmental Affairs. No proposed constitutional amendment shall be recommended to either house of the General Assembly except upon the affirmative vote of a majority of the Senate members of the Joint Committee on Constitutional Amendments and an affirmative vote of a majority of the House members of the Joint Committee on Constitutional Amendments. No resolution proposing a constitutional amendment shall be filed in either the House of Representatives or the Senate after the thirty-first (31st) day of each regular session of the General Assembly. All resolutions proposing constitutional amendments shall be referred to the Joint Committee on Constitutional Amendments. Other resolutions proposing constitutional amendments shall not be reported to or considered by either house of the General Assembly until the original recommendations of the Joint Committee on Constitutional Amendments are disposed of by both Houses. A resolution proposing a constitutional amendment may be considered only during a regular session.

**Constitution of the State of Arkansas of 1874, Article 19, § 22. Constitutional amendments.**

Either branch of the General Assembly, at a regular session thereof, may propose amendments to this Constitution; and if the same be agreed to by a majority of all members elected to each house, such proposed amendments shall be entered on the journals with the yeas and nays, and published in at least one newspaper in each county, where a newspaper is published, for six months immediately preceding the next general election for Senators and Representatives, at which time the same shall be submitted to the electors of the State, for approval or rejection; and if a majority of the electors voting at such election adopt such amendments, the same shall become a part of this Constitution. But no more than three amendments shall be proposed or submitted at the same time. They shall be so submitted as to enable the electors to vote on each amendment separately.

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS:**  
**SUGGESTIONS MADE BY MEMBERS TO ADDRESS**  
**THE EFFICIENCY OF THE COMMITTEE**

**a. Issue: Dates and regularity of meetings.**

Suggestion 1. Set a date for the first joint meeting by rule, i.e. five (5) days after the last day to file amendments.

Suggestion 2. Set the regularity of the meetings by rule, i.e. weekly.

Suggestion 3. Allow for these rules to be suspended by a vote of the joint committee.

Suggestion 4. Early in session, hold a brief meeting of the Joint Committee to refresh members of the rules, and to provide guidance as to the procedural policies that are preferred and established by the Chairs.

**b. Issue: Shell resolutions presenting constitutional amendments: Deadlines to 'fill in' .**

Suggestion 1. Require by rule that all shell resolutions be 'filled in' by amendment before the date of the first meeting in order to be considered.

Suggestion 2. Prohibit the filing of shell resolutions so that all resolutions are ready for presentment and discussion immediately after the filing deadline.

Suggestion 3. Require by rule that all shell resolutions be 'filled in' within a set number of days after the filing deadline in order to be considered.

NOTE: Changes to requirements on shell resolutions require amendments to Joint Rules, Senate Rules, and House Rules.

**c. Issue: The order in which the committee addresses the resolutions presenting constitutional amendments.**

Suggestion 1. Require that resolutions be addressed by the committee in the order they were filed.

A. If a member does not wish to present his or her resolution at the time scheduled by the committee, the resolution is rescheduled at the end of the agenda. If the member passes three (3) times, the resolution becomes inactive.

**d. Issue: How many resolutions presenting constitutional amendments are referred to the full body of the General Assembly, and how the committee will determine which ones are referred if they refer less than the maximum number allowed.**

Suggestion 1. The prior practice of the House Committee and Senate Committee to alternate each session as to which committee will have two (2) amendments to send to the full body. The other committee may send one (1) amendment.

Suggestion 2. The House Committee and the Senate Committee each get one (1) amendment to send to the full body. The third amendment constitutionally allowed to be referred to the people is forfeited. The Joint Committee may suspend the rule and revive the forfeited amendment by vote.

Suggestion 3. The House and the Senate committee may each send three (3) amendments to the Joint Committee. Those amendments receiving a majority vote are referred to the full body of the General Assembly.

Suggestion 4. If more than three (3) amendments are referred to the full body of the General Assembly the first three (3) that receive a majority vote are referred to the people.

Suggestion 5. The House and Senate Committees meet jointly to hear all amendments from both chambers. They then convene separately and hear summaries, ask additional questions of their chamber's amendment sponsors, and vote. The committees then meet jointly for final votes and decisions.