

Bluffing Their Way to an Art. V Convention, Part 2



By Judi Caler

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Part 2: The Best PR Money Can Buy

In [Part 1](#), we saw that ever since 1907, 2/3 or more of the States have had at least one active application on record asking Congress to call a convention under Art. V. And if Congress is hoodwinked into validating *all non-rescinded applications* by passing [H.R.8419](#) or its 2023 counterpart, [\[i\]](#) Congress will likely trigger the first constitutional convention since 1787.

So why wasn't Congress deceived into calling a convention 50 or 100 years ago? Perhaps it's because the [PR industry](#) hadn't come of age yet! To justify a "call," Congress, whose priority is getting re-elected, would require considerable constituent pressure—or the appearance of such—before casting a vote that would risk our Constitution.

Enter Mark Meckler, President of the Convention of States (COS), who has been waging a PR war with millions of dollars in [dark money](#) for almost a decade. COS is creating the impression that Americans are demanding a "[convention of states](#)" under Article V, while most Americans have no clue what an Article V Convention (A5C) is.

"Grassroots"—From the Top Down?!

In 2011—while Meckler was still with the Tea Party and just

getting involved in the [convention deception](#), he joined Eric O’Keefe’s John Hancock Committee of the States (JHCOS) as a Director and President. [O’Keefe](#) is known as the front man for the [Koch brothers’ money](#). He is also [Chairman of the Board](#) and co-founder of Meckler’s Citizens for Self-Governance (CSG)–parent to COS.

In its 2011 IRS filing signed by Meckler, JHCOS reported over \$1.8 million in anonymous contributions ([pg. 1](#)), and almost one million dollars in expenses to public relations & lobbying firms ([pg. 8](#)).[\[iii\]](#) At least [38%](#) of the contributions can be traced to [Donors Trust](#), the “dark money ATM” of the Right.

Hmmm–right out of the gate, almost \$2 Million in seed money; pricey PR and lobbying firms; and [\\$180,000 per year](#) for Meckler by 2013, which appears to have started in mid-[2012](#)–well before Meckler introduced his first A5C application. Moreover, [two members](#) of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR)[\[iii\]](#)–[Robert P. George](#) and [C. Boyden Gray](#)–have been on Meckler’s [Legal Board of Reference](#) since its inception in 2014. That isn’t exactly how a *grassroots* organization gets started!

An “Army of 5 Million”

Petitions. A sophisticated computer has been spinning [numbers](#) representing [alleged signers](#) of COS petitions for years. But when Meckler was confronted with fake signatures in Idaho a few years back, he [admitted \(@ 1:28:00\)](#) that he can’t guarantee who signed, whether they remember that they signed, or whether they changed their mind since they “signed.” Indeed, it’s a mystery why half of Meckler’s “army” hasn’t bothered to sign at all![\[iv\]](#)

Nevertheless, Meckler gets away with claiming he has “an army of 5 million” supporters nationwide, and boasting about tens of thousands of supporters at each Legislature he visits. That’s twice the size of China’s army! And Meckler doesn’t

bother to prove his numbers; nor is he usually questioned about them publicly.

Polls. COS commissions polls which proponents claim show bipartisan support for a “convention of states”—a complicated, little-understood issue—from data collected in a one- to three-minute robo-call, text, or phone survey. But COS polls don’t measure public opinion. COS commissions “[push polls](#)” to sway public opinion. PR firms and private pollsters design polls to get the response their clients pay for. The result is often published as [News](#). Outcomes are manipulated by the questions asked.

For years, COS has routinely released official-looking poll results showing close to [2/3 support or more](#) from voters responding to [trick questions](#). Yet contrary to being a popular issue, A5C legislation is a hot potato, drawing bipartisan **opposition** nationwide from grassroots constituents defending the Constitution. To pass these controversial applications, it often takes years of false narratives, wining & dining, pressure from leadership, backroom deals, empty promises, threats, stifling the opposition, dirty tricks, [\[v\] smear tactics](#), [contributions](#), wearing down legislators, and more. [\[vi\]](#)

Meckler simulates pressure from below by touting his “army” and convincing Republican legislators that they’re putting their jobs on the line, should they oppose his “[grassroots](#)” legislation. In addition, pressure from above, exerted by lobbyists and leadership, can be intense—including threats of running primary opponents against incumbent holdouts. This leaves too many Republicans shaking in their boots with visions of Meckler’s army knocking on doors to defeat them at the next election.

Name-dropping. For lack of a sound argument, Meckler resorts to reckless name-dropping when he’s among Republicans: [\[vii\]](#)

*“And this is an irrefutable fact. In the United States of America today, **every single** nationally-known conservative, law professor, talker, politician, who has taken a position—nationally known—on the convention of states is in favor. There are no exceptions. Rush Limbaugh, God rest his soul, Levin, Hannity, Beck [[since reversed](#)], Shapiro, all the professors I’ve named on our legal advisory board; there are NO exceptions...”* –Meckler, Roundtable discussion, Harrisburg, PA Nov. 8, 2021

COS has courted big name endorsements since 2014, and Meckler has admitted he’s willing to pay for them. In this [30-second clip](#) from 2019, Meckler tells his fans that he tried unsuccessfully to get Rush’s endorsement, knowing it would have cost \$2.25 million just to start negotiations!

Apparently, Meckler has managed to convince—or buy—a few dozen well-known politicians, pundits, and public figures. And we don’t know if COS endorsements are a result of direct payments, payroll, paid advertising, or something else, because COS expenses are lumped together on financials in broad reporting categories like “advertising and promotion” and “fees for services,” with most recipients anonymous.[\[viii\]](#)

Still, from the little COS *must* disclose, we know that COS Action (COSA) bankrolled former US Senator Tom Coburn (turned COS lobbyist) to the tune of \$240,000 annually for a combined total of almost one million dollars in [2016](#), [2017](#), [2018](#), & [2019](#). The 2017 link also shows former US Senator and COS endorser Jim DeMint as a paid COS lobbyist, raking in \$140,000. Former US Senator Rick Santorum, who replaced Coburn, admits he was formerly opposed to an A5C. Not surprisingly, Santorum’s appearance as an endorser on the COS website coincided with his being added to Meckler’s 2021 payroll.

Posthumous Endorsements. Meckler apparently conjured up Justice Antonin Scalia’s support *after* Scalia’s death.

Scalia's opposition to a constitutional convention was a matter of public record from [a 2014 interview](#). But Justice Scalia's body had scarcely gone cold when Meckler broadcast that Scalia *supported* an Article V Convention, based on law professor Scalia's [published comments](#) from 1979. That was seven years *before* Justice Scalia's 30-year tenure on the bench, during which he changed his mind. Neither Rush's nor Scalia's support for an A5C appeared on COS's endorsement page while they were around to speak for themselves.

Smoke and Mirrors

As it turns out, the "grassroots momentum" behind COS is smoke and mirrors. The total number of States with *non-rescinded applications* on record today, is the *same* as the 2012 total (39). So, if we were to judge by the [validation scheme](#) built into H.R.8419, COS has made *no progress* in the past decade! That's because as many states rescinded their applications as passed new applications since 2012.

Nevertheless, the deceptive PR campaign and misleading validation schemes[\[ix\]](#) complement each other. Without the PR campaign, the validation schemes lack the appearance of public support. And without the validation schemes, the PR campaign would have no quick path to victory. [The con-con lobby](#), backed by both the globalist [Right](#) and [Left](#), is hoping to turn their bluff into a [self-fulfilling prophecy](#). And they need only one convention to impose their preferred [Form of Government](#).

But bluffing works only by deceiving the uninformed. *Please share this article and [PART 1](#) with your State Legislators and members of Congress.*

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Footnotes:

[\[i\]](#) The 2023 bill# will change, but the content will probably remain the same.

[\[ii\]](#) Later Forms 990 show JHCOS DBA (doing business as) [CSG](#) with the same tax ID#.

[\[iii\]](#) CFR sponsored "[Building a North American Community](#)," which promotes integrating Canada, the US, & Mexico politically and militarily. To move the US into the North American Union, they need a new [constitution](#).

[\[iv\]](#) At this writing, Meckler claims an "army" of 5 million while his computer shows 2.4 million "signatures."

[\[v\]](#) See e.g., "[How the 'COS' Cheated Utah](#)."

[\[vi\]](#) E.g., after 7 years of trying, NE passed the COS application in 2022 by suspending a Senate rule and trading votes: "I'll vote for your bad legislation, if you'll vote for mine."

[\[vii\]](#) Among Democrats, he's bipartisan!

[\[viii\]](#) Form 990 requires that only the 5 highest-paid independent contractors receiving over \$100,000 be reported.

[\[ix\]](#) H.R.8419 is only the latest deceptive validation scheme advanced by the con-con lobby. Prior attempts have gone from [declaring victory](#) to the [absurd](#).