

AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONAL LEAGUE

"To Uphold and Defend the Constitution of the United States against all Foreign and Domestic Enemies"

—U. S. Oath of Allegiance

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ROOM 1804
27 WILLIAM STREET
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ROOM 220, 726 14TH ST. N.W.
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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WASHINGTON, D. C.,

June 25, 1918.

Senator Howard Sutherland,
Senate Office Building,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

We are informed that you are one of the thinking statesmen who have reached mature convictions regarding the fundamental principles of our form of government; that you hold, with the present United States Constitution, and the latest decision of the Supreme Court, that

"the power of the States to regulate their purely internal affairs by such laws as seem wise to the local authority is inherent and has never been surrendered to the general government.*****If Congress can regulate matters entrusted to local authority the power of the States over local affairs will be eliminated and thus our system of Government be practically destroyed."

You are aware that the most fundamental sovereign right of the people of your State is to decide, by popular vote, the qualifications for the exercise of the suffrage; that these qualifications have been placed in your STATE CONSTITUTION, subject to amendment ONLY by popular vote, to put them BEYOND interference, even by your own Legislature.

It is now proposed, through the Susan B. Anthony suffrage FORCE BILL, not only to surrender to the general government the most inherent power reserved to your State as a sovereign body; but to rob your people of the right they have reserved to themselves in your State Constitution, and to have a local question that your people will not trust even your own Legislature to decide, decided by the members of 36 OTHER State Legislatures!

This Federal FORCE BILL, for instance, positively takes from the people of your State the right to say who shall vote for your State officers; absolutely DISFRANCHISES every voter in your State on THIS LOCAL QUESTION, hitherto distinctly reserved to popular vote by your State Constitution.

And while disfranchising your own people on a question of most vital local concern, this Federal force bill gives the Legislatures of Idaho, Wyoming, Nevada and Utah - who know nothing about your local conditions and problems - exactly FOUR TIMES as much power to decide who shall vote in YOUR State as your OWN Legislature would have under this FORCE BILL.

This suffrage force bill gives some 4,000 members of 36 Legislatures, regardless of local conditions, racial problems or extra expense, the EXCLUSIVE right to decide for the entire Nation a question which the people of YOUR State do not allow even your Legislature to decide for your state!

Such a revolutionary force bill cannot possibly stop at the first step. As Elihu Root - who is no radical or devoted defender of "State rights" - says:

"If you enable some parts of the country to coerce other parts of the country in their local affairs by the use of national power, you will destroy the whole system and ultimately break up the Union. THIS is PRECISELY what THIS AMENDMENT undertakes to do."

This force bill is repugnant to every principle of democracy ever voiced in this country. The law of majority rule, called by Jefferson "the first principle of a Republic" is outraged when a Federal force bill undertakes to DISFRANCHISE the voters on a subject precisely because the MAJORITY of them have rejected it. Local self-government, "self-determination" is equally ignored when every State in the Union is compelled to submit its most vital local issue to the LEGISLATURES of other States, rather than to its own citizens.

Furthermore, in a time of war and national crisis, this amendment would not only start a stupendous political agitation for ratification in 48 States, but, upon ratification, would immediately renew the "reconstruction" and racial problems in the South, as well as DOUBLE the Socialist and Bolshevik menace in the North. It would add to the expense of the Government of \$25,000,000 a year; wasting on a revolutionary political experiment an amount that would buy FIVE HUNDRED MILLION rounds of ammunition for national defense; an amount sufficient to pay for EVERY BULLET our army of a million men would use in a year!

Will you not, therefore, stand by the CONVICTIONS which your own statesmanship and legal training MUST have given you, and vote "NO" on the Susan B. Anthony suffrage force bill next Thursday?

Respectfully,

THE AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONAL LEAGUE,

Charles S. Fairchild
President.

June 26, 1918.

Mr. Charles S. Fairchild,
27 William Street,
New York City.

My dear Mr. Fairchild:

Your letter of the 25th instant in regard to the Susan B. Anthony Amendment has been received, and I am very glad to have your views on the subject. I assure you that I am giving the matter the most serious consideration.

With kindest personal regards, and thanking you for your letter, I am,

Very truly yours,