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## Year of the Constitution?

January 4th, 2011, 2:48 pm · 4 Comments · posted by by Alan Bock, Register editorial writer

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In [our editorial today](#) we rather downplayed the fact that the House plans to open tomorrow by reading the Constitution aloud as a symbolic gesture — unless perhaps they could resurrect Orson Welles or Dylan Thomas to do a dramatic reading, or perhaps have Sharon Stone do a "Basic Instinct" reading — although James Earl Jones could probably read it and hold peoples' attention.

However, [Cato Institute's](#) constitutional guru Roger Pilon did a [nice piece in today's WSJ](#) (we're planning to run it tomorrow), in which he conceded that in and of itself the reading won't bring back limited government, but expressed a hope that it might lead to a serious discussion of what kinds of governmental action the Constitution does and doesn't authorize. Then [Ilya Shapiro of Cato](#) offered the optimistic thought that 2011 might become the "Year of the Constitution," marking renewed [attention to the founding document](#) and the limited government it sought to establish.

In some senses it is sad to hope that this year might mark renewed attention to the Constitution. For elected legislators every year should be the year of the Constitution, and every introduction of a new bill should be a Constitutional Moment as the legislator specifies which article of the Constitution authorizes that particular exercise of power. In these days of imperial decline, however, it is probably too optimistic even to hope for a Year of the Constitution. What [Roger](#) and Ilya have to say, however, about what government might look like of the congresscritters actually took the Constitution seriously, is still interesting.


**Posted in:** Civil Liberties • Libertarianism • Cato Institute • Ilya Shapiro • Roger Pilon • Year of the Constitution




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