

By Senators Atwater, Gaetz, Jones, and Bennett

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1 Senate Concurrent Resolution

2 A concurrent resolution urging Congress to call a
3 convention for the purpose of proposing amendments to
4 the Constitution of the United States to provide for a
5 balanced federal budget and limit the ability of
6 Congress to dictate to states requirements for the
7 expenditure of federal funds.
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9 WHEREAS, fiscal discipline and economic integrity have been
10 core principles of American governance, and

11 WHEREAS, the American people have historically demanded the
12 same prudent, responsible, and intellectually honest financial
13 behavior from their elected representatives as ultimately
14 compels individual behavior, and

15 WHEREAS, it is the firm conviction of the Legislature of
16 the State of Florida that it is wrong to fund the prosperity of
17 the present generation by robbing future Americans of their own,
18 and

19 WHEREAS, mortgaging the birthright of our children and
20 grandchildren is a dangerous departure from traditional American
21 values which threatens to permanently undermine the strength of
22 our nation, and

23 WHEREAS, the national debt has nearly doubled over the past
24 8 years and Florida's share of that debt is \$727 billion, more
25 than all Floridians make in wages and salaries in 2 years, and

26 WHEREAS, for the nation to pay off the entire federal debt
27 by 2015, Congress would have to triple the federal income taxes
28 of every American and devote the increase exclusively to debt
29 payments, and

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30 WHEREAS, our debt is increasingly owed to the governments
31 of foreign nations, not to the citizens of the United States;
32 therefore, our wealth is transferred to others and will not be
33 available to supply the means for America's future growth and
34 prosperity, and

35 WHEREAS, this generation will bequeath to its children one
36 of the world's most indebted industrial democracies, and

37 WHEREAS, high federal deficits cause increasingly high
38 payments for debt interest in the future, make future borrowing
39 more costly, reduce investment activity, and thus reduce the
40 size of the future economy, and

41 WHEREAS, the people of Florida recognized the wisdom of
42 fiscal discipline and enshrined in its State Constitution the
43 requirement for a balanced budget to place a prudent limit on
44 the tendencies of government, and

45 WHEREAS, the Florida Legislature has made fiscally
46 responsible decisions, maintaining a balanced budget and saving
47 the citizens of this State from crippling deficits, massive debt
48 burdens, and bankruptcy, and

49 WHEREAS, we the Legislature of the State of Florida call
50 for the Constitution of the United States to be amended to
51 require the Federal Government to operate with fiscal
52 responsibility, common sense, and the revenues granted to it by
53 the people, and

54 WHEREAS, the Federal Government has for too long relied on
55 revenue increases and borrowing against our future rather than
56 on prudent spending decisions within the limits of current
57 revenues, and

58 WHEREAS, lasting resolution of this nation's budget deficit

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59 can be achieved only by addressing the spending habits of our
60 Federal Government, not by increasing the tax burden under which
61 our citizens already labor, and

62 WHEREAS, Article V of the Constitution of the United States
63 makes provision for amending the Constitution on the application
64 of the legislatures of two-thirds of the several states, calling
65 a convention for proposing amendments that shall be valid to all
66 intents and purposes if ratified by the legislatures of three-
67 fourths of the several states, or by conventions in three-
68 fourths thereof, as one or the other mode of ratification may be
69 proposed by Congress, NOW, THEREFORE,

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71 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida, the House
72 of Representatives Concurring:

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74 That the Legislature of the State of Florida, with all due
75 respect and great reluctance, does hereby make application to
76 the Congress of the United States pursuant to Article V of the
77 Constitution of the United States to call an Article V
78 amendments convention for the sole purpose of proposing
79 amendments to the Constitution of the United States:

80 (1) To achieve and maintain a balanced budget by:

81 (a) Requiring that such balanced budget account for all
82 obligations of the Federal Government;

83 (b) Allowing flexibility in federal balanced budget
84 requirements by providing exceptions related to exigencies such
85 as national emergencies or threats to the nation's security;

86 (c) Imposing spending limits on the Federal Government;

87 (d) Setting extraordinary vote requirements for new or

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88 increased federal taxes and other revenues; and

89 (e) Prohibiting federal mandates on states to impose taxes
90 or fees.

91 (2) To control the ability of the Congress and the various
92 federal executive agencies to require states to expend funds by:

93 (a) Limiting the ability of Congress and the various
94 federal executive agencies to pass legislation requiring states
95 to spend money or to take actions requiring the expenditure of
96 money unless federal funds are provided in ongoing amounts
97 sufficient to offset the full costs of such requirements; and

98 (b) Limiting the ability of Congress to dictate to states
99 requirements for the expenditure of federal funds other than
100 such requirements as may be necessary to measure outcomes to be
101 achieved through the expenditure of the federal funds, leaving
102 to the several states the ability to decide how to best
103 accomplish those outcomes.

104 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this concurrent resolution
105 supersedes all previous memorials applying to the Congress of
106 the United States to call a convention for the purpose of
107 proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States,
108 including Senate Memorial 234 and House Memorial 2801, both
109 passed in 1976, and superseded, revoked, and withdrawn in 1988
110 by Senate Memorial 302, and that such previous memorials are
111 hereby revoked and withdrawn, nullified, and superseded to the
112 same effect as if they had never been passed.

113 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this concurrent resolution is
114 revoked and withdrawn, nullified, and superseded to the same
115 effect as if it had never been passed, and retroactive to the
116 date of passage, if it is used for the purpose of calling a

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117 convention or used in support of conducting a convention to
118 amend the Constitution of the United States for any purpose
119 other than requiring a balanced federal budget or limiting the
120 ability of the Federal Government to require states to spend
121 money.

122 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this concurrent
123 resolution be dispatched to the President of the United States
124 Senate, to the Speaker of the United States House of
125 Representatives, to each member of the Florida delegation to the
126 United States Congress, and to the presiding officers of each
127 house of the several state legislatures.