

By Senator Cowin

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Senate Joint Resolution No. ____

A joint resolution proposing an amendment to Section 1 of Article IX of the State Constitution, as amended, relating to public education, to repeal requirements relating to the maximum number of students who may be assigned to each public school classroom for students in prekindergarten through grade 12.

Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

That the following amendment to Section 1 of Article IX of the State Constitution, as amended in 2002, is agreed to and shall be submitted to the electors of this state for approval or rejection at a special election specifically authorized by law for that purpose, and, if approved, the amendment shall take effect upon becoming a law:

ARTICLE IX
EDUCATION

SECTION 1. Public education.--

(a) The education of children is a fundamental value of the people of the State of Florida. It is, therefore, a paramount duty of the state to make adequate provision for the education of all children residing within its borders. Adequate provision shall be made by law for a uniform, efficient, safe, secure, and high quality system of free public schools that allows students to obtain a high quality education and for the establishment, maintenance, and operation of institutions of higher learning and other public education programs that the needs of the people may require.
~~To assure that children attending public schools obtain a high~~

CODING:Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

1 ~~quality education, the legislature shall make adequate~~
2 ~~provision to ensure that, by the beginning of the 2010 school~~
3 ~~year, there are a sufficient number of classrooms so that:~~

4 ~~(1) The maximum number of students who are assigned to~~
5 ~~each teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms for~~
6 ~~prekindergarten through grade 3 does not exceed 18 students;~~

7 ~~(2) The maximum number of students who are assigned to~~
8 ~~each teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms for~~
9 ~~grades 4 through 8 does not exceed 22 students; and~~

10 ~~(3) The maximum number of students who are assigned to~~
11 ~~each teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms for~~
12 ~~grades 9 through 12 does not exceed 25 students.~~

13
14 ~~The class size requirements of this subsection do not apply to~~
15 ~~extracurricular classes. Payment of the costs associated with~~
16 ~~reducing class size to meet these requirements is the~~
17 ~~responsibility of the state and not of local schools~~
18 ~~districts. Beginning with the 2003-2004 fiscal year, the~~
19 ~~legislature shall provide sufficient funds to reduce the~~
20 ~~average number of students in each classroom by at least two~~
21 ~~students per year until the maximum number of students per~~
22 ~~classroom does not exceed the requirements of this subsection.~~

23 (b) Every four-year old child in Florida shall be
24 provided by the State a high quality pre-kindergarten learning
25 opportunity in the form of an early childhood development and
26 education program which shall be voluntary, high quality,
27 free, and delivered according to professionally accepted
28 standards. An early childhood development and education
29 program means an organized program designed to address and
30 enhance each child's ability to make age appropriate progress
31 in an appropriate range of settings in the development of

1 language and cognitive capabilities and emotional, social,
2 regulatory and moral capacities through education in basic
3 skills and such other skills as the Legislature may determine
4 to be appropriate.

5 (c) The early childhood education and development
6 programs provided by reason of subparagraph (b) shall be
7 implemented no later than the beginning of the 2005 school
8 year through funds generated in addition to those used for
9 existing education, health, and development programs. Existing
10 education, health, and development programs are those funded
11 by the State as of January 1, 2002 that provided for child or
12 adult education, health care, or development.

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following statement be
14 placed on the ballot:

15 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

16 ARTICLE IX, SECTION 1

17 MAXIMUM CLASS SIZES.--Proposing an amendment to the
18 State Constitution to repeal class-size requirements that
19 apply to public school classrooms for students in
20 prekindergarten through grade 12.

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