

By Senator Gaetz

4-00317A-09

20092394\_\_

Senate Joint Resolution

A joint resolution proposing an amendment to Section 1 of Article IX of the State Constitution to increase the number of students who may be assigned to a public school teacher and to require that the existing class size limits apply to the average number of students per teacher at a public school.

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 is agreed to and shall be submitted to the electors of this state for approval or rejection at the next general election or at an earlier special election specifically authorized by law for that purpose:

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.

(b) To assure that children attending public schools obtain

4-00317A-09

20092394\_\_

30 a high quality education, the legislature shall make adequate  
31 provision to ensure that, ~~by the beginning of the 2010 school~~  
32 ~~year,~~ there are a sufficient number of classroom teachers to  
33 maintain small class sizes. ~~classrooms so that:~~

34 (1) ~~The maximum number of students who are assigned to each~~  
35 ~~teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms~~ For  
36 prekindergarten through grade 3, the number of students assigned  
37 to a teacher may not exceed 23 students; and the average number  
38 of students assigned to a teacher may ~~does~~ not exceed 18  
39 students at a school. ~~;~~

40 (2) ~~The maximum number of students who are assigned to each~~  
41 ~~teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms~~ For grades 4  
42 through 8, the number of students assigned to a teacher may not  
43 exceed 27; and the average number of students assigned to a  
44 teacher may ~~does~~ not exceed 22 students at a school. ~~;~~ ~~and~~

45 (3) ~~The maximum number of students who are assigned to each~~  
46 ~~teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms~~ For grades 9  
47 through 12, the number of students assigned to a teacher may not  
48 exceed 30; and the average number of students assigned to a  
49 teacher may ~~does~~ not exceed 25 students at a school.

50  
51 The class size requirements of this subsection do not apply to  
52 extracurricular or virtual classes. Payment of the costs  
53 associated with reducing class size to meet these requirements  
54 is the responsibility of the state and not of local school  
55 ~~schools~~ districts. ~~Beginning with the 2003-2004 fiscal year, the~~  
56 ~~legislature shall provide sufficient funds to reduce the average~~  
57 ~~number of students in each classroom by at least two students~~  
58 ~~per year until the maximum number of students per classroom does~~

4-00317A-09

20092394\_\_

59 ~~not exceed the requirements of this subsection.~~

60 (c) ~~(b)~~ Every four-year old child in Florida shall be  
61 provided by the State a high quality pre-kindergarten learning  
62 opportunity in the form of an early childhood development and  
63 education program, which shall be voluntary, high quality, free,  
64 and delivered according to professionally accepted standards. An  
65 early childhood development and education program means an  
66 organized program designed to address and enhance each child's  
67 ability to make age appropriate progress in an appropriate range  
68 of settings in the development of language and cognitive  
69 capabilities and emotional, social, regulatory, and moral  
70 capacities through education in basic skills and such other  
71 skills as the Legislature may determine to be appropriate.

72 (c) The early childhood education and development programs  
73 provided by reason of subparagraph (b) shall be implemented no  
74 later than the beginning of the 2005 school year through funds  
75 generated in addition to those used for existing education,  
76 health, and development programs. Existing education, health,  
77 and development programs are those funded by the State as of  
78 January 1, 2002 that provided for child or adult education,  
79 health care, or development.

80 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following statement be  
81 placed on the ballot:

82 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

83 ARTICLE IX, SECTION 1

84 SCHOOL AVERAGE CLASS SIZE.—This amendment to the State  
85 Constitution increases the number of students who may be  
86 assigned to a public school teacher. However, the average number  
87 of students per teacher may not exceed the current class size

4-00317A-09

20092394\_\_

88 limits.

89       For prekindergarten through grade 3, a teacher may not have  
90 more than 23 students. However, the average number of students  
91 per teacher for this grade grouping at a school may not exceed  
92 18 students.

93       For grade 4 through 8, a teacher may not have more than 27  
94 students. However, the average number of students per teacher  
95 for this grade grouping at a school may not exceed 22 students.

96       For grade 9 through grade 12, a teacher may not be assigned  
97 more than 30 students. However, the average number of students  
98 per teacher at a school may not exceed 25 students.