

HJR 617

2009

House Joint Resolution

A joint resolution proposing an amendment to Section 1 of Article IX of the State Constitution to establish minimum salaries for full-time public school teachers.

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. To assure that children attending public schools obtain a high quality education, the legislature shall make adequate provision to ensure that, by the beginning of the 2010 school year, there are a sufficient number

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29 | of classrooms so that:

30 | (1) The maximum number of students who are assigned to
 31 | each teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms for
 32 | prekindergarten through grade 3 does not exceed 18 students;

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

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

39 |

40 | The class size requirements of this subsection do not apply to
 41 | extracurricular classes. Payment of the costs associated with
 42 | reducing class size to meet these requirements is the
 43 | responsibility of the state and not of local school ~~schools~~
 44 | districts. Beginning with the 2003-2004 fiscal year, the
 45 | legislature shall provide sufficient funds to reduce the average
 46 | number of students in each classroom by at least two students
 47 | per year until the maximum number of students per classroom does
 48 | not exceed the requirements of this subsection.

49 | (b) By 2012, the salary of a new full-time public school
 50 | teacher shall be no less than the national average salary for
 51 | new full-time public school teachers, as provided by law. By
 52 | 2012, the average salary for experienced full-time public school
 53 | teachers shall be no less than the national average salary for
 54 | full-time public school teachers, as provided by law. Any
 55 | increase in the beginning and the average full-time public
 56 | school teacher salaries shall be independent of employee

57 benefits and shall not alter, jeopardize, or decrease existing
 58 employee benefits. The state, rather than school districts, must
 59 fund any salary increase required by this subsection. Nothing in
 60 this subsection shall impair collective bargaining.

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

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

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

83 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

84 ARTICLE IX, SECTION 1

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85 MINIMUM SALARIES FOR NEW AND EXPERIENCED PUBLIC SCHOOL
86 TEACHERS.--This amendment to the State Constitution sets minimum
87 salaries for new and experienced full-time public school
88 teachers, commencing in 2012. The minimum salary for a new full-
89 time public school teacher must be the national average salary
90 for new full-time public school teachers, as provided by law.
91 The average salary for experienced full-time public school
92 teachers must be no less than the national average salary for
93 full-time public school teachers, as provided by law. The salary
94 adjustments required by this amendment shall be independent of
95 employee benefits, shall not alter, jeopardize, or decrease
96 existing employee benefits, and shall not impair collective
97 bargaining. The state, rather than school districts, must fund
98 any required salary increases. This amendment deletes provisions
99 relating to the implementation of early childhood education and
100 development programs by the beginning of the 2005 school year.