

By Senator Bennett

21-00769-10

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Senate Joint Resolution

A joint resolution proposing an amendment to Section 1 of Article IX of the State Constitution, to repeal the class size limits.

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 which ~~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 of classrooms so that:~~

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

36 ~~(3) The maximum number of students who are assigned to each~~
37 ~~teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms for grades 9~~
38 ~~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 schools districts.~~
44 ~~Beginning with the 2003-2004 fiscal year, the legislature shall~~
45 ~~provide sufficient funds to reduce the average number of~~
46 ~~students in each classroom by at least two students per year~~
47 ~~until the maximum number of students per classroom does not~~
48 ~~exceed the requirements of this subsection.~~

49 (b) Every four-year old child in Florida shall be provided
50 by the State a high quality pre-kindergarten learning
51 opportunity in the form of an early childhood development and
52 education program which shall be voluntary, high quality, free,
53 and delivered according to professionally accepted standards. An
54 early childhood development and education program means an
55 organized program designed to address and enhance each child's
56 ability to make age appropriate progress in an appropriate range
57 of settings in the development of language and cognitive
58 capabilities and emotional, social, regulatory and moral

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59 capacities through education in basic skills, and such other
60 skills as the Legislature may determine to be appropriate.

61 (c) The early childhood education and development programs
62 provided by reason of subparagraph (b) shall be implemented no
63 later than the beginning of the 2005 school year through funds
64 generated in addition to those used for existing education,
65 health, and development programs. Existing education, health,
66 and development programs are those funded by the State as of
67 January 1, 2002 that provided for child or adult education,
68 health care, or development.

69 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following statement be
70 placed on the ballot:

71 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

72 ARTICLE IX, SECTION 1

73 REPEAL OF CLASS SIZE LIMITS.—The State Constitution
74 currently limits the number of students who may be assigned to a
75 teacher in a public school classroom. The State Constitution
76 does not expressly permit those limits to be exceeded for any
77 reason. This proposed amendment to the State Constitution
78 repeals the class size limits.