

By Senator Abruzzo

25-01675-16

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Senate 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 of classrooms so that:

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

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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 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 2017, the salary for a new full-time teacher in a
50 public school must be at least equal to the national average
51 salary for a new full-time teacher in a public school. By 2017,
52 the average salary for an experienced full-time teacher in a
53 public school must be at least equal to the national average
54 salary for an experienced full-time teacher in a public school.
55 Any increase in the salaries for new full-time teachers and for
56 experienced full-time teachers in a public school which occurs
57 as a result of adjustments required by this subsection is
58 independent of employee benefits and may not alter, jeopardize,
59 or decrease existing employee benefits. The state, rather than
60 the school districts, shall fund any salary increase required by
61 this subsection. Nothing in this subsection shall impair

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62 collective bargaining.

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

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

83 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following statement be
 84 placed on the ballot:

85 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

86 ARTICLE IX, SECTION 1

87 MINIMUM SALARIES FOR NEW AND EXPERIENCED FULL-TIME TEACHERS
 88 IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.—Proposing an amendment to the State
 89 Constitution to set minimum salaries for new and experienced
 90 full-time teachers in public schools. By 2017, the minimum

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91 salary for new and experienced full-time teachers in public
92 schools must be at least the national average salary for new and
93 experienced full-time teachers in public schools. Any salary
94 adjustments are independent of employee benefits and may not
95 result in decreased employee benefits. The state must fund any
96 required salary increases.