

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. J. RES. 229

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States related
to the public debt.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 19, 2024

Mr. BURLISON submitted the following joint resolution; which was referred to
the Committee on the Judiciary

JOINT RESOLUTION

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United
States related to the public debt.

1 *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*
2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled*
3 *(two-thirds of each House concurring therein),* That the fol-
4 lowing article is proposed as an amendment to the Con-
5 stitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all
6 intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when
7 ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several
8 States within seven years after the date of its submission
9 for ratification:

1 “ARTICLE —

2 “SECTION 1. Total outlays of the Government of the
3 United States shall not exceed total receipts of the Gov-
4 ernment of the United States at any point in time unless
5 the excess of outlays over receipts is financed exclusively
6 by debt issued in strict conformity with this article.

7 “SECTION 2. Outstanding debt shall not exceed au-
8 thorized debt, which initially shall be an amount equal to
9 105 percent of the outstanding debt on the effective date
10 of this article. Authorized debt shall not be increased
11 above its aforesaid initial amount unless such increase is
12 first approved by the legislatures of the several States as
13 provided in section 3.

14 “SECTION 3. From time to time, Congress may in-
15 crease authorized debt to an amount in excess of its initial
16 amount set by section 2 only if it first publicly refers to
17 the legislatures of the several States an unconditional, sin-
18 gle subject measure proposing the amount of such in-
19 crease, in such form as provided by law, and the measure
20 is thereafter publicly and unconditionally approved by a
21 simple majority of the legislatures of the several States,
22 in such form as provided respectively by State law: *Pro-*
23 *vided*, That no inducement requiring an expenditure or tax
24 levy shall be demanded, offered or accepted as a quid pro
25 quo for such approval. If such approval is not obtained

1 within sixty (60) calendar days after referral then the
2 measure shall be deemed disapproved and the authorized
3 debt shall thereby remain unchanged.

4 “SECTION 4. Whenever the outstanding debt exceeds
5 98 percent of the debt limit set by section 2, the President
6 shall enforce said limit by publicly designating specific ex-
7 penditures for impoundment in an amount sufficient to
8 ensure outstanding debt shall not exceed the authorized
9 debt. Said impoundment shall become effective thirty (30)
10 days thereafter, unless Congress first designates an alter-
11 nate impoundment of the same or greater amount by con-
12 current resolution, which shall become immediately effec-
13 tive. The failure of the President to designate or enforce
14 the required impoundment is an impeachable mis-
15 demeanor. Any purported issuance or incurrence of any
16 debt in excess of the debt limit set by section 2 is void.

17 “SECTION 5. No bill that provides for a new or in-
18 creased general revenue tax shall become law unless ap-
19 proved by a two-thirds roll call vote of the whole number
20 of each House of Congress. However, this requirement
21 shall not apply to any bill that provides for a new end
22 user sales tax which would completely replace every exist-
23 ing income tax levied by the Government of the United
24 States; or for the reduction or elimination of an exemp-

1 tion, deduction, or credit allowed under an existing general
2 revenue tax.

3 “SECTION 6. For purposes of this article, ‘debt’
4 means any obligation backed by the full faith and credit
5 of the Government of the United States; ‘outstanding
6 debt’ means all debt held in any account and by any entity
7 at a given point in time; ‘authorized debt’ means the max-
8 imum total amount of debt that may be lawfully issued
9 and outstanding at any single point in time under this
10 article; ‘total outlays of the Government of the United
11 States’ means all expenditures of the Government of the
12 United States from any source; ‘total receipts of the Gov-
13 ernment of the United States’ means all tax receipts and
14 other income of the Government of the United States, ex-
15 cluding proceeds from its issuance or incurrence of debt
16 or any type of liability; ‘impoundment’ means a proposal
17 not to spend all or part of a sum of money appropriated
18 by Congress; and ‘general revenue tax’ means any income
19 tax, sales tax, or value-added tax levied by the Government
20 of the United States excluding imposts and duties.

21 “SECTION 7. This article is immediately operative
22 upon ratification, self-enforcing, and Congress may enact
23 conforming legislation to facilitate enforcement.”.

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