

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 115

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED MARCH 10, 1997

**By Senators SCHLUTER, LITTELL, Bassano, Ciesla, Matheussen,
Bark, Bubba, Connors, Cafiero, Kosco,
Ewing, Martin, Cardinale, Bennett and McNamara**

1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** ratifying a proposed amendment to the
2 Constitution of the United States to require that the federal budget shall be
3 balanced, except under certain circumstances.
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5 **WHEREAS**, The government of the United States has had a budget deficit
6 during 31 of the last 32 years; and
7 **WHEREAS**, As a result of these deficits, the federal government's debt now
8 exceeds \$5 trillion, or more than \$20,000 for every citizen; and
9 **WHEREAS**, The funding of this debt greatly burdens the economic
10 development of the United States by diverting money from productive
11 investments to the purchase of government obligations; and
12 **WHEREAS**, The debt also affects public policy, because an increasing portion
13 of federal revenues must be used for debt service and is therefore
14 unavailable for programs to benefit people in need; and
15 **WHEREAS**, The growth of the federal budget deficit takes a toll on the nation's
16 prosperity by limiting the fiscal independence of future generations; and
17 **WHEREAS**, In order to carry out its leadership role in world economic affairs,
18 the United States must not be perceived as a nation incapable of balancing
19 its budget or controlling its economic destiny; and
20 **WHEREAS**, The fiscal limitations imposed by the federal deficit represents a
21 betrayal of those principles of liberty upon which this nation was founded
22 and to which its laws and government are dedicated; and
23 **WHEREAS**, The following article has been proposed in the Congress of the
24 United States as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States:

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26
27 "ARTICLE --
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29 "Section 1. Total outlays for any fiscal year shall not exceed total receipts
30 for that fiscal year, unless three-fifths of the whole number of each House of
31 Congress shall provide by law for a specific excess of outlays over receipts by
32 a rollcall vote.

33 "Section 2. The limit on the debt of the United States held by the public

1 shall not be increased, unless three-fifths of the whole number of each House
2 shall provide by law for such an increase by a rollcall vote.

3 "Section 3. Prior to each fiscal year, the President shall transmit to the
4 Congress a proposed budget for the United States Government for that fiscal
5 year in which total outlays do not exceed total receipts.

6 "Section 4. No bill to increase revenue shall become law unless approved
7 by a majority of the whole number of each House by a rollcall vote.

8 "Section 5. Congress may waive the provisions of this article for any fiscal
9 year in which a declaration of war is in effect. The provisions of this article
10 may be waived for any fiscal year in which the United States is engaged in
11 military conflict which causes an imminent and serious military threat to national
12 security and is so declared by a joint resolution, adopted by a majority of the
13 whole number of each House, which becomes law.

14 "Section 6. The Congress shall enforce and implement this article by
15 appropriate legislation, which may rely on estimates of outlays and receipts.

16 "Section 7. Total receipts shall include all receipts of the United States
17 Government except those derived from borrowing. Total outlays shall include
18 all outlays of the United States Government except for those for the repayment
19 of debt principal.

20 "Section 8. This article shall take effect beginning with the fiscal year 2002
21 or with the second fiscal year beginning after its ratification, whichever is
22 later."; and

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24 **WHEREAS**, In accordance with the provisions of Article V of the Constitution
25 of the United States, the resolution proposing the Constitutional amendment
26 hereinabove set forth provides that the amendment "shall be valid to all
27 intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when ratified by the
28 legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years after
29 the date of its submission for ratification"; now, therefore,

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31 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Senate of the State of New Jersey (the General
32 Assembly concurring):

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34 1. The Legislature of the State of New Jersey, on behalf of the State of
35 New Jersey, does hereby ratify the proposed amendment to the Constitution
36 of the United States, as reproduced in the preamble to this concurrent
37 resolution.

1 2. The Secretary of the State of New Jersey is directed to notify the
2 Archivist of the United States of the action taken by the Legislature of the
3 State of New Jersey with respect to this proposed amendment to the
4 Constitution of the United States.

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STATEMENT

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9 This concurrent resolution ratifies a proposed amendment to the United
10 States Constitution to require that the annual budget of the United States shall
11 be balanced, unless three-fifths of the members of each House of Congress
12 shall provide by law for a specific deficit amount by a rollcall vote. In addition,
13 the limit on the federal debt could not be increased unless three-fifths of the
14 members of each House provides by law for such an increase. The proposed
15 amendment provides that Congress may waive these restrictions for any fiscal
16 year in which a declaration of war is in effect or any fiscal year in which the
17 United States is engaged in military conflict which causes an imminent and
18 serious military threat to national security (as declared by a joint resolution,
19 adopted by a majority of the whole number of each House, which becomes
20 law). The proposed amendment further provides that no bill to increase
21 revenue shall become law unless approved by a majority of the whole number
22 of each House by a rollcall vote.

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27 Ratifies federal balanced budget amendment to U.S. Constitution.