ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. 3

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
212th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JULY 28, 2006

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman JOSEPH J. ROBERTS, JR.
District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)
Assemblyman ALEX DECROCE
District 26 (Morris and Passaic)

Co-Sponsored by:

SYNOPSIS
Establishes four joint legislative committees to recommend proposals to bring about property tax reform.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 7/31/2006)
ACR3 ROBERTS, DECROCE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION supplementing the Joint Rules of the Senate and the General Assembly to establish four joint legislative committees to make recommendations to both Houses of the Legislature regarding proposals to bring about property tax reform and to provide for the jurisdiction and procedures thereof.

WHEREAS, The most fundamental obligation of a government is to protect the welfare and well-being of its citizens; and
WHEREAS, Under the New Jersey Constitution, this responsibility is vested in the Legislature and the Governor; and
WHEREAS, This State's high property taxes are a matter of great concern to the people of New Jersey who view the current system as regressive, inequitable, burdensome, and a threat to the financial security of individuals and communities; and
WHEREAS, There is a need for the Legislature to address this situation by devising, and acting upon, means to bring about property tax reform based upon a fairer distribution of tax burdens and the adoption of efficiencies; and
WHEREAS, This process should be initiated by the creation of joint legislative committees that review and formulate proposals concerning school funding, government consolidation and shared services, public employee benefits, and constitutional reform and property tax constitutional convention; now, therefore

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

The following Joint Rules are adopted:

1. There are created four joint legislative committees. Each committee shall consist of six members, three of whom shall be members of the Senate appointed by the President, and three of whom shall be members of the General Assembly appointed by the Speaker. No more than two members of a committee appointed by the President of the Senate or the Speaker of the General Assembly shall be members of the same political party. A member may be removed from a committee for cause by the appointing officer, except that if any member is so removed, the appointing officer shall forthwith appoint another member in the same manner that the original appointment was made. The President and the Speaker shall each designate one appointee to a committee as co-chairperson of that committee.

2. Each committee shall meet at the call of its co-chairpersons. The committees may review the functions, duties, operations and programs of agencies of the State and its political subdivisions relevant to the areas of review as set forth herein, as well as the
relevant governing statutes, regulations, ordinances, resolutions, opinions, and orders. As part of that review, the committees may consider pending and proposed bills and resolutions, as well as relevant reports and testimony. The deliberations of the committees shall conclude with a report, that shall be transmitted to the Senate and the General Assembly, which shall include proposals for constitutional amendments and legislation to bring about property tax reform. The report shall be transmitted no later than November 15, 2006 unless an extension is approved jointly by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the General Assembly.

3. a. There is created the Joint Legislative Committee on Public School Funding Reform. It shall be the duty of the committee to review and formulate proposals that address the manner in which government provides for the maintenance and support of a system of free public schools for the instruction of the children of this State. The committee may consider proposals to: provide State support based on student needs rather than geographic location; eliminate disincentives to the regionalization of school districts; control school district spending, particularly administrative spending; and improve the effectiveness of the current law limiting increases in school district spending; as well as such other proposals as the committee deems appropriate.

b. There is created the Joint Legislative Committee on Government Consolidation and Shared Services. It shall be the duty of the committee to review and formulate proposals that address the sharing of services and regionalization of functions at all levels of government, as well as such other proposals as the committee deems appropriate. As a basis for these deliberations, the committee shall use the CORE agenda proposed by the Speaker of the General Assembly. In addition, the committee shall consider proposals to consolidate or eliminate State agency functions and State agencies or commissions.

c. There is created the Joint Legislative Committee on Public Employee Benefits Reform. It shall be the duty of the committee to review and formulate proposals that address abuses of the system of benefits provided to public employees, including all branches of State government and all local government entities, and to control the costs of the State and its political subdivisions for public employee retirement, health care and other benefits, as well as such other proposals as the committee deems appropriate. As a basis for its deliberations, the committee shall use the recommendations of the Benefits Review Task Force contained in its December 1, 2005 report, as well as other relevant reports.

d. There is created the Joint Legislative Committee on Constitutional Reform and Citizens Property Tax Constitutional Convention. It shall be the duty of the committee to review and formulate proposals that address property tax reform through
amendments to the Constitution of the State of New Jersey, as well
as such other proposals as the committee deems appropriate. The
committee shall also determine whether amendments to the State
Constitution should be recommended to the Legislature for
submission directly to the voters or whether such amendments
should be referred to a citizens property tax constitutional
convention to be convened for the purpose of reforming the system
of property taxation.

4. Each joint legislative committee shall organize as soon as
possible after the appointment of its members.

5. Four members of a joint legislative committee shall
constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business. Official
committee action shall be by a majority vote of the members
serving on the committee.

6. The joint legislative committees shall be entitled to call to
their assistance and avail themselves of the services of such
employees of any State, county or municipal department, board,
bureau, commission, agency or authority as they may deem
necessary or desirable, and as may be available for their purposes.

7. Any member or members of a joint legislative committee
who do not concur with the report of the committee may issue a
minority statement, that shall be included in the transmitted report
of the committee.

8. All public meetings shall be recorded and transcribed, and,
when feasible, audio and video of public meetings shall be
broadcast on the State Legislature’s website. All meetings at which
official committee action is taken shall be open to the public. The
chairpersons of a joint legislative committee shall notify the Office
of Legislative Services, for posting and distribution to the public, of
the time, place and agenda of each meeting of the committee. The
notice shall be distributed to the public at least five days prior to the
meeting, except in the case of an emergency, or except when the
presiding officers, acting jointly, waive the notice requirement.

9. To the extent that the jurisdiction or recommendations of
joint committees may overlap or conflict, the co-chairpersons of
those committees shall consult with each other to coordinate and
resolve differences.

10. This concurrent resolution shall take effect immediately.
STATEMENT

This concurrent resolution would establish four joint legislative committees to review and formulate proposals that address property tax reform for the people of this State. The committees are the Joint Legislative Committee on Public School Funding Reform, the Joint Legislative Committee on Government Consolidation and Shared Services, the Joint Legislative Committee on Public Employee Benefits Reform, and the Joint Legislative Committee on Constitutional Reform and Citizens Property Tax Constitutional Convention. The committees will review and formulate proposals within their respective subject areas as set forth in this resolution, and make recommendations to both Houses of the Legislature.