

1 SJR100
2 130391-1
3 By Senators Orr, Scofield, Sanford, Holtzclaw, Williams,
4 McGill, and Beason
5 RFD:
6 First Read: 26-APR-11

8 URGING CONGRESS TO PROPOSE A FEDERAL BALANCED BUDGET
9 AMENDMENT.

10
11 WHEREAS, the reluctance of the federal government to
12 incur debt and other obligations was established early in
13 American history, with deficits occurring only in relation to
14 extraordinary circumstances such as war; yet for much of the
15 20th century and into the 21st, the United States has operated
16 on a budget deficit, including the 2010 budget year, which
17 surpassed an astounding \$1,300,000,000,000, an annual deficit
18 that exceeded the entire gross state product of many of the
19 states; and

20 WHEREAS, an exception to this pattern was at the
21 turn of the 21st century; in FY 2001, America enjoyed a \$128
22 billion budget surplus; and

23 WHEREAS, since FY 2001, America has been burdened
24 with 10 consecutive years of deficits, to-wit:

25 FY 2002: \$158 billion deficit

26 FY 2003: \$377 billion deficit

27 FY 2004: \$413 billion deficit

FY 2005: \$318 billion deficit

FY 2006: \$248 billion deficit

FY 2007: \$161 billion deficit

FY 2008: \$459 billion deficit

FY 2009: \$1.4 trillion deficit

FY 2010: \$1.3 trillion deficit

FY 2011: \$1.5 trillion deficit (estimated); and

WHEREAS, as of January 2011, America's accumulated national debt exceeded \$12 trillion now estimated at over \$13 trillion; and

WHEREAS, the Congressional Budget Office projects

that, if current trends continue under the White House's proposed budget, each of the next 10 years has a projected deficit exceeding \$600 billion; and

WHEREAS, the budget deficits of the United States of America are unsustainable and constitute a substantial threat to the solvency of the federal government as evidenced by the comments of Standard and Poor's on April 18, 2011, regarding the longer term credit outlook for the United States; and

WHEREAS, Congress has been unwilling or unable to address the persistent problem of overspending and has recently increased the statutory limit on the public debt and enacted a variety of legislation that will ultimately cause the federal government to incur additional debt; and

WHEREAS, the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform in its report The Moment of Truth

includes recommendations to reduce the federal deficit that have not been considered by the United States Congress; and

WHEREAS, the consequences of current spending policies are far-reaching; United States indebtedness to governments of foreign nations continues to rise; costly federal programs that are essentially unfunded or underfunded; mandates to states threaten the ability of state and local governments to continue to balance their budgets; moreover, future generations of Americans inevitably face increased taxation and a weakened economy as a direct result of the bloated debt; and

WHEREAS, many states have previously requested that Congress propose a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget, but Congress has proven to be unresponsive; anticipating situations in which Congress at times could fail to act, the drafters of the United States Constitution had the foresight to adopt the language in Article V that establishes that on application of the Legislatures of two-thirds of the several states, Congress shall call a convention for proposing amendments; and

WHEREAS, in prior years the Alabama Legislature has called on Congress to pass a Balanced Budget Constitutional Amendment, many other states have done the same, all to no avail; and

WHEREAS, a balanced budget amendment would require the government not to spend more than it receives in revenue and compel lawmakers to carefully consider choices about

1 spending and taxes; by encouraging spending control and
2 discouraging deficit spending, a balanced budget amendment
3 will help put the nation on the path to lasting prosperity;
4 now therefore,

5 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
6 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the Legislature of the State
7 of Alabama hereby respectfully urges the Congress of the
8 United States to propose and submit to the states for
9 ratification a federal balanced budget amendment to the United
10 States Constitution.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That, in the event that
12 Congress does not submit a balanced budget amendment to the
13 states for ratification on or before December 31, 2011, the
14 Alabama Legislature hereby makes application to the United
15 States Congress to call a convention under Article V of the
16 United States Constitution for the specific and exclusive
17 purpose of proposing an amendment to that Constitution
18 requiring that, in the absence of a national emergency (as
19 determined by the positive vote of such members of each house
20 of Congress as the amendment shall require), the total of all
21 federal appropriations made by Congress for any fiscal year
22 not exceed the total of all federal revenue for that fiscal
23 year.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That, unless rescinded by a
25 succeeding Legislature, this application by the Alabama
26 Legislature constitutes a continuing application in accordance
27 with Article V of the United States Constitution until at

1 least two-thirds of the Legislatures of the several states
2 have made application for a convention to provide for a
3 balanced budget.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That, in the event that
5 Congress does not submit a balanced budget amendment to the
6 states for ratification on or before December 31, 2011, the
7 Alabama Legislature hereby requests that the legislatures of
8 each of the several states that compose the United States
9 apply to Congress requesting Congress to call a convention to
10 propose such an amendment to the United States Constitution.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this application is
12 rescinded in the event that a convention to propose amendments
13 to the United States Constitution includes purposes other than
14 providing for a balanced federal budget.

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the copies of this
16 resolution be provided to the following officials:

17 1. The President of the United States.
18 2. The Speaker of the United States House of
19 Representatives.
20 3. The President of the United States Senate.
21 4. All members of the Alabama Delegation to Congress
22 with the request that this resolution be officially entered in
23 the Congressional Record as an application to the Congress of
24 the United States of America for a convention to propose an
25 amendment to provide for a federal balanced budget in the
26 event that Congress does not submit such an amendment to the
27 states for ratification on or before December 31, 2011.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this
2 resolution be provided to the Secretaries of State and to the
3 presiding officers of the Legislatures of the other states.