

1 Resolution of the Taxation and Budget Reform Commission
2 A resolution proposing an amendment to Section 1 of
3 Article IX of the State Constitution to permit the state
4 to provide for innovative educational alternatives to
5 public schools that allow students to obtain a high
6 quality education.

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8 Be It Resolved by the Taxation and Budget Reform Commission:
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10 That the following amendment to Section 1 of Article IX of
11 the State Constitution is agreed to and shall be submitted to
12 the electors of this state for approval or rejection at the next
13 general election or at an earlier special election specifically
14 authorized by law for that purpose:

15 ARTICLE IX

16 EDUCATION

17 SECTION 1. Public education.--

18 (a) The education of children is a fundamental value of
19 the people of the State of Florida. It is, therefore, a
20 paramount duty of the state to make adequate provision for the
21 education of all children residing within its borders. Adequate
22 provision shall be made by law for a uniform, efficient, safe,
23 secure, and high quality system of free public schools that
24 allows students to obtain a high quality education and for the
25 establishment, maintenance, and operation of institutions of
26 higher learning and other public education programs that the
27 needs of the people may require. This system shall be the
28 principal means for satisfying the state's duty to educate,
29 though other innovative educational alternatives that allow

30 students to obtain a high quality education shall also be
31 permissible.

32 (b) To assure that children attending public schools
33 obtain a high quality education, the legislature shall make
34 adequate provision to ensure that, by the beginning of the 2010
35 school year, there are a sufficient number of classrooms so
36 that:

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

40 (2) The maximum number of students who are assigned to
41 each teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms for
42 grades 4 through 8 does not exceed 22 students; and

43 (3) The maximum number of students who are assigned to
44 each teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms for
45 grades 9 through 12 does not exceed 25 students.

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47 The class size requirements of this subsection do not apply to
48 extracurricular classes. Payment of the costs associated with
49 reducing class size to meet these requirements is the
50 responsibility of the state and not of local schools districts.
51 Beginning with the 2003-2004 fiscal year, the legislature shall
52 provide sufficient funds to reduce the average number of
53 students in each classroom by at least two students per year
54 until the maximum number of students per classroom does not
55 exceed the requirements of this subsection.

56 (c)~~(b)~~ Every four-year old child in Florida shall be
57 provided by the State a high quality pre-kindergarten learning
58 opportunity in the form of an early childhood development and

59 education program which shall be voluntary, high quality, free,
60 and delivered according to professionally accepted standards. An
61 early childhood development and education program means an
62 organized program designed to address and enhance each child's
63 ability to make age appropriate progress in an appropriate range
64 of settings in the development of language and cognitive
65 capabilities and emotional, social, regulatory and moral
66 capacities through education in basic skills and such other
67 skills as the Legislature may determine to be appropriate.

68 (d)~~(e)~~ The early childhood education and development
69 programs provided by reason of subparagraph (b) shall be
70 implemented no later than the beginning of the 2005 school year
71 through funds generated in addition to those used for existing
72 education, health, and development programs. Existing education,
73 health, and development programs are those funded by the State
74 as of January 1, 2002 that provided for child or adult
75 education, health care, or development.

76 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following statement be
77 placed on the ballot:

78 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

79 ARTICLE IX, SECTION 1

80 INNOVATIVE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION ALTERNATIVES.--The
81 State Constitution limits the power of the state to provide for
82 alternatives to the public school system. This proposed
83 amendment provides that public schools are the principal means
84 for satisfying the state's duty to educate, though other
85 innovative educational alternatives that allow students to
86 obtain a high quality education shall also be permissible.