

Arizona Becomes the 27th State to Call for an Article V Balanced Budget Amendment Convention

Phoenix, Arizona – In concurrence with its House of Representatives, on March 27th, 2017, the Arizona Senate voted 17 – 12 to adopt HCR 2013 which petitions Congress to call a convention limited to the proposal of a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution. In its passage of HCR 2013, Arizona becomes the 27th of 34 states necessary to call the first Article V convention in American history.

Though the U.S. Constitution has, for 241 years, authorized the states to propose amendments via convention, the cumbersome nature of gaining a 34-state consensus has left the Article V process gathering dust. However, according to HCR 2013's sponsor, Speaker of the House, J.D. Mesnard, it may now be time to dust the cobwebs off the state-initiated amendment process. Speaker Mesnard put it this way:

“Arizona is sending a message that if the federal government can't get their fiscal house in order, the states will do it for them, just as our Founding Fathers envisioned. Arizona is at the forefront of efforts urging states to flex their muscles by exercising their constitutionally prescribed powers to push back against the federal government.”



Specifically, Arizona is pushing back against sixty years of irresponsible fiscal policy in Washington, which has resulted in ballooning deficits and an accumulated national debt of nearly twenty trillion dollars. Further, payments and interest on the national debt are taking over an increasing share of the federal budget, limiting the country's ability to maintain an adequate defense and fund social programs on which many vulnerable Americans depend.

State leadership in Arizona has recognized that the current federal spending trajectory in our nation's capital is unsustainable. Their solution in HCR 2013 would require that “...in the absence of a national emergency, the total of all federal appropriations made by the Congress for any fiscal year may not exceed the total of all estimated federal revenue for that fiscal year...”

The constitutional balanced budget amendment remedy still requires seven more state applications to call a convention, and any balanced budget amendment proposed would have to be ratified by three-fourths (38) of the states. Speaker Mesnard is ready to continue the effort. He concluded, “I look forward to talking with our counterparts in other states to begin work organizing an Article V amendments convention that will finally put our national government on a more solvent fiscal path.”

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