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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 634

Offered January 23, 1995

Reiterating Virginia's support for balanced budget and item veto amendments to the Constitution of the United States, requesting Congress to propose the same to the states for ratification, rescinding Virginia's requests for constitutional conventions to propose such amendments, and requesting Congress not to call a constitutional convention for any purpose until measures are adopted to ensure that a convention can be limited to a specific purpose.

Patrons—Katzen, Dudley and Ruff

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the Virginia General Assembly, by Senate Joint Resolution No. 36 of 1976, requested that Congress either submit to the states a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution or call a limited constitutional convention for the specific and exclusive purpose of proposing such an amendment; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly, by 1977 House Joint Resolution No. 168, applied to Congress to call a constitutional convention to amend the Constitution to provide an item veto power for the President; and

WHEREAS, the continued worsening of the federal budget deficit, the growth of the national debt, and the consequent fiscal crisis which the federal government faces demonstrate the wisdom of such amendments, and the General Assembly remains steadfast in its support for both initiatives; and

WHEREAS, subsequent public debate and reflection have produced serious questions about using the convention method to propose the amendments; and

WHEREAS, the constitutional convention is an unknown, and the apportionment and selection of delegates, method of voting in convention, and other essential procedural details are not specified in Article V of the Constitution of the United States; and

WHEREAS, since these resolutions were adopted, doubt has been expressed by constitutional authorities as to whether a constitutional convention can be restricted to specific and exclusive purposes as intended by the Assembly in adopting Senate Joint Resolution No. 36 in 1976 and House Joint Resolution No. 168 in 1977; and

WHEREAS, the calling of a convention to amend the Constitution may result in unforeseen changes and place in jeopardy the fundamental law of this nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly of Virginia withdraw its applications and rescind its requests for the calling of constitutional conventions for the specific and exclusive purposes stated in its 1976 Senate Joint Resolution No. 36 and in its 1977 House Joint Resolution No. 168; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the General Assembly request the Congress to issue no call for a constitutional convention for the purpose of an amendment or amendments to the United States Constitution unless and until enforceable provisions are adopted that ensure that a convention can and will be restricted to specific and exclusive purposes; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the General Assembly hereby reiterate its continuing support for, and request the Congress of the United States to prepare and submit to the several states, amendments to the United States Constitution to require a balanced budget and provide a line-item power for the President; and, be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit copies of this resolution to the President of the Senate of the United States, the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States, the Archivist of the United States at the National Archives and Records Administration of the United States, the members of the Virginia delegation to the United States Congress, and the legislatures of each of the several states, attesting to the adoption of this resolution.

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