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**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 8205**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Miloscia, Baumgartner, O'Ban, Becker, Bailey, and Warnick

BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON, IN LEGISLATIVE SESSION ASSEMBLED:

THAT, At the next general election to be held in this state the secretary of state shall submit to the qualified voters of the state for their approval and ratification, or rejection, an amendment to Article IX by repealing section 4 in its entirety and an amendment to Article I, section 11 and Article XXVI, section 1 of the Constitution of the state of Washington to read as follows:

Article I, section 11. Absolute freedom of conscience in all matters of religious sentiment, belief and worship, shall be guaranteed to every individual, and no one shall be molested or disturbed in person or property on account of religion; but the liberty of conscience hereby secured shall not be so construed as to excuse acts of licentiousness or justify practices inconsistent with the peace and safety of the state((~~. No public money or property shall be appropriated for or applied to any religious worship, exercise or instruction, or the support of any religious establishment~~)): PROVIDED, ((~~HOWEVER,~~)) That this article shall not be so construed as to prohibit religiously affiliated organizations from receiving or competing for, on the same basis as nonreligious organizations, public money or property, nor shall it forbid the employment by the state ((~~of~~)) in any position a person based on their religious beliefs, including but not limited to, a chaplain for such of the state custodial, correctional, and mental institutions, or by a county's or public hospital district's hospital, health care facility, or hospice, as in the discretion of the legislature may seem justified. No religious qualification shall be required for any public office or employment, nor shall any person be incompetent as a witness or juror, in consequence of his opinion on matters of religion, nor be questioned in any court of justice touching his religious belief to affect the weight of his testimony.

Article XXVI, section 1. The following ordinance shall be irrevocable without the consent of the United States and the people of this state:

**First.** That perfect toleration of religious sentiment shall be secured and that no inhabitant of this state shall ever be molested in person or property on account of his or her mode of religious worship.

**Second.** That the people inhabiting this state do agree and declare that they forever disclaim all right and title to the unappropriated public lands lying with the boundaries of this state, and to all lands lying within said limits owned or held by any Indian or Indian tribes; and that until the title thereto shall have been extinguished by the United States, the same shall be and remain subject to the disposition of the United States, and said Indian lands shall remain under the absolute jurisdiction and control of the congress of the United States and that the lands belonging to citizens of the United States residing without the limits of this state shall never be taxed at a higher rate than the lands belonging to residents thereof; and that no taxes shall be imposed by the state on lands or property therein, belonging to or which may be hereafter purchased by the United States or reserved for use: *Provided,* That nothing in this ordinance shall preclude the state from taxing as other lands are taxed any lands owned or held by any Indian who has severed his tribal relations, and has obtained from the United States or from any person a title thereto by patent or other grant, save and except such lands as have been or may be granted to any Indian or Indians under any act of congress containing a provision exempting the lands thus granted from taxation, which exemption shall continue so long and to such an extent as such act of congress may prescribe.

**Third.** The debts and liabilities of the Territory of Washington and payment of the same are hereby assumed by this state.

((**~~Fourth.~~** ~~Provision shall be made for the establishment and maintenance of systems of public schools free from sectarian control which shall be open to all the children of said state.~~))

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this amendment is a single amendment within the meaning of Article XXIII, section 1 of the state Constitution.

The legislature finds that the changes contained in this amendment constitute a single integrated plan to provide for a system of publicly funded schools. If this amendment is held to be separate amendments, this joint resolution is void in its entirety and is of no further force and effect.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the secretary of state shall cause notice of this constitutional amendment to be published at least four times during the four weeks next preceding the election in every legal newspaper in the state.