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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

Read first time 01/27/17. Referred to Committee on State Government.

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

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

9            Article I, section 11. Absolute freedom of conscience in all  
10 matters of religious sentiment, belief and worship, shall be  
11 guaranteed to every individual, and no one shall be molested or  
12 disturbed in person or property on account of religion; but the  
13 liberty of conscience hereby secured shall not be so construed as to  
14 excuse acts of licentiousness or justify practices inconsistent with  
15 the peace and safety of the state(~~(. No public money or property~~  
16 ~~shall be appropriated for or applied to any religious worship,~~  
17 ~~exercise or instruction, or the support of any religious~~  
18 ~~establishment))): PROVIDED, ((HOWEVER,)) That this article shall not  
19 be so construed as to prohibit religiously affiliated organizations  
20 from receiving or competing for, on the same basis as nonreligious  
21 organizations, public money or property, nor shall it forbid the  
22 employment by the state ((of)) in any position a person based on~~

1 their religious beliefs, including but not limited to, a chaplain for  
2 such of the state custodial, correctional, and mental institutions,  
3 or by a county's or public hospital district's hospital, health care  
4 facility, or hospice, as in the discretion of the legislature may  
5 seem justified. No religious qualification shall be required for any  
6 public office or employment, nor shall any person be incompetent as a  
7 witness or juror, in consequence of his opinion on matters of  
8 religion, nor be questioned in any court of justice touching his  
9 religious belief to affect the weight of his testimony.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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