

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJM 8012

As of February 26, 1997

Brief Description: Requesting a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution.

Sponsors: Senators Hale, Benton, Oke, Sellar, Deccio, Finkbeiner, Morton, Rossi, Anderson, Johnson, Roach, McDonald, Newhouse, Wood, Strannigan, Long, Swecker, Horn and Goings.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Ways & Means: 2/27/97.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Steve Jones (786-7440)

Background: The federal deficit (the difference between federal revenues and expenditures) for fiscal year 1997 is estimated to be \$124 billion. The total federal deficit is \$5.3 trillion.

Article 8 of the United States Constitution grants to Congress the power to borrow money. The amount of debt created under this power is not limited by the Constitution.

An amendment to the U.S. Constitution requires a two-thirds vote of each house of Congress and the ratification of three-fourths of the legislatures of the 50 states of the union. This ratification must occur within seven years after the submission of the proposed amendment to the states.

Summary of Bill: The Legislature requests that Congress propose an amendment to the U.S. Constitution requiring that, in the absence of a national emergency, federal fiscal year expenditures cannot exceed federal fiscal year revenues.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.