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**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 4203**

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**State of Washington**

**68th Legislature**

**2023 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Stonier, Berg, Alvarado, Bergquist, Berry, Duerr, Fitzgibbon, Ortiz-Self, Ramel, Reeves, Senn, Simmons, Walen, Kloba, Goodman, Reed, Lekanoff, Gregerson, Doglio, Pollet, Callan, Fosse, and Davis

Read first time 01/16/23. Referred to Committee on Education.

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 VII, section 2 and Article VIII, section 6 of the  
7 Constitution of the state of Washington to read as follows:

8 Article VII, section 2. Except as hereinafter provided and  
9 notwithstanding any other provision of this Constitution, the  
10 aggregate of all tax levies upon real and personal property by the  
11 state and all taxing districts now existing or hereafter created,  
12 shall not in any year exceed one percent of the true and fair value  
13 of such property in money. Nothing herein shall prevent levies at the  
14 rates now provided by law by or for any port or public utility  
15 district. The term "taxing district" for the purposes of this section  
16 shall mean any political subdivision, municipal corporation,  
17 district, or other governmental agency authorized by law to levy, or  
18 have levied for it, ad valorem taxes on property, other than a port  
19 or public utility district. Such aggregate limitation or any specific  
20 limitation imposed by law in conformity therewith may be exceeded  
21 only as follows:

1 (a) By any taxing district when specifically authorized so to do  
2 by a majority of at least three-fifths of the voters of the taxing  
3 district voting on the proposition to levy such additional tax  
4 submitted not more than twelve months prior to the date on which the  
5 proposed initial levy is to be made and not oftener than twice in  
6 such twelve month period, either at a special election or at the  
7 regular election of such taxing district, at which election the  
8 number of voters voting "yes" on the proposition shall constitute  
9 three-fifths of a number equal to forty percent of the total number  
10 of voters voting in such taxing district at the last preceding  
11 general election when the number of voters voting on the proposition  
12 does not exceed forty percent of the total number of voters voting in  
13 such taxing district in the last preceding general election; or by a  
14 majority of at least three-fifths of the voters of the taxing  
15 district voting on the proposition to levy when the number of voters  
16 voting on the proposition exceeds forty percent of the number of  
17 voters voting in such taxing district in the last preceding general  
18 election. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Constitution,  
19 any proposition pursuant to this subsection to levy additional tax  
20 for the support of the common schools or fire protection districts  
21 may provide such support for a period of up to four years and any  
22 proposition to levy an additional tax to support the construction,  
23 modernization, or remodelling of school facilities or fire facilities  
24 may provide such support for a period not exceeding six years.  
25 Notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection, a proposition  
26 under this subsection to levy an additional tax for a school district  
27 shall be authorized by a majority of the voters voting on the  
28 proposition, regardless of the number of voters voting on the  
29 proposition;

30 (b) By any taxing district otherwise authorized by law to issue  
31 general obligation bonds for capital purposes, for the sole purpose  
32 of making the required payments of principal and interest on general  
33 obligation bonds issued solely for capital purposes, other than the  
34 replacement of equipment, when authorized so to do by majority of at  
35 least three-fifths of the voters of the taxing district voting on the  
36 proposition to issue such bonds and to pay the principal and interest  
37 thereon by annual tax levies in excess of the limitation herein  
38 provided during the term of such bonds, submitted not oftener than  
39 twice in any calendar year, at an election held in the manner  
40 provided by law for bond elections in such taxing district, at which

1 election the total number of voters voting on the proposition shall  
2 constitute not less than forty percent of the total number of voters  
3 voting in such taxing district at the last preceding general  
4 election. Any such taxing district shall have the right by vote of  
5 its governing body to refund any general obligation bonds of said  
6 district issued for capital purposes only, and to provide for the  
7 interest thereon and amortization thereof by annual levies in excess  
8 of the tax limitation provided for herein. A proposition by a school  
9 district to issue bonds, and to pay the principal and interest on the  
10 bonds by an annual tax levy during the term of the bonds in excess of  
11 the limitation provided in this section, shall be authorized by a  
12 majority of the voters voting on the proposition. The provisions of  
13 this section shall also be subject to the limitations contained in  
14 Article VIII, Section 6, of this Constitution;

15 (c) By the state or any taxing district for the purpose of  
16 preventing the impairment of the obligation of a contract when  
17 ordered so to do by a court of last resort.

18 Article VIII, section 6. No county, city, town, school district,  
19 or other municipal corporation shall for any purpose become indebted  
20 in any manner to an amount exceeding one and one-half per centum of  
21 the taxable property in such county, city, town, school district, or  
22 other municipal corporation, without the assent of three-fifths of  
23 the voters therein voting at an election to be held for that purpose,  
24 nor in cases requiring such assent shall the total indebtedness at  
25 any time exceed five per centum on the value of the taxable property  
26 therein, to be ascertained by the last assessment for state and  
27 county purposes previous to the incurring of such indebtedness,  
28 except that in incorporated cities the assessment shall be taken from  
29 the last assessment for city purposes: *Provided, That the assent*  
30 necessary to authorize a school district to incur such debt shall be  
31 by a majority of the voters voting on the proposition: *Provided*  
32 further, That no part of the indebtedness allowed in this section  
33 shall be incurred for any purpose other than strictly county, city,  
34 town, school district, or other municipal purposes: *Provided further,*  
35 That (a) any city or town, with such assent, may be allowed to become  
36 indebted to a larger amount, but not exceeding five per centum  
37 additional for supplying such city or town with water, artificial  
38 light, and sewers, when the works for supplying such water, light,  
39 and sewers shall be owned and controlled by the municipality and (b)

1 any school district with such assent, may be allowed to become  
2 indebted to a larger amount but not exceeding five per centum  
3 additional for capital outlays.

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

7 The legislature finds that the changes contained in this  
8 amendment constitute a single integrated plan for providing for a  
9 simple majority of voters voting to authorize school district levies  
10 and bonds. If this amendment is held to be separate amendments, this  
11 joint resolution is void in its entirety and is of no force and  
12 effect.

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

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