

HJR

16

Alaska State Legislature



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Representative Al Vezey

SPONSOR STATEMENT HJR16

"Relating to a federal balanced budget amendment."

Federal government overspending has become the rule and not the exception over the years. It is clear that change is needed and the federal government can no longer handle the responsibility of creating our national budget without new guidelines.

One generation should not have the right to burden another with its debts. The unlimited ability to borrow has resulted in a federal debt totaling \$5.3 trillion.

Our nation must learn to live within its means, just as each individual must. Passing a balanced budget amendment will bring discipline to our national spending: without this discipline we face economic chaos. With the passage of a Balanced Budget Amendment, more resources would go toward private investment, interest rates would drop and businesses could afford to expand. It is for these reasons I ask the members of both houses to support this resolution urging the Congress, the President of the United States, and each state of our nation to support the Balanced Budget Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

January 31, 1997

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Balanced budget worth fight

Time to seek outside help

The era of big government still has a pulse.

With the one-vote defeat last week in the Senate of the balanced budget constitutional amendment, the forces of big government proved they're not going away quietly.

A handful of Democrats who had voted for the amendment in the past and even campaigned on it in the last election, broke their campaign promise and kept the balanced budget amendment one vote shy of the necessary votes needed for passage. For some Democrats, allegiance to their leadership was more important than keeping a campaign promise.

No wonder voters are cynical about Washington.

The debate about the balanced budget amendment is really a debate about the power of Washington. The opponents of a balanced budget amendment—though they find rhetoric of balancing the budget fashionable—are unwilling to face the reality of actually getting the job done.

Supporters, on the other hand, believe that requiring Washington to live within its means is a value worth fighting for.

It is simply unrealistic to rely on the hope that after 28 years of unbalanced budgets—through six presidents and 14 Congresses—Washington can now balance the budget and keep it that way without the outside leverage of a constitutional amendment. We know—win or lose—it's simply the right thing to do because the benefits to every American are clear:

Sen. Frank Murkowski



Guest Opinion

■ A balanced budget amendment could lower interest rates on mortgages, car loans, and student loans, saving Alaska families as much as \$125 a month.

■ Washington's growth, cost and power would be restrained. It's wrong to ask Americans to work harder to pay for Washington programs that don't work. We must return to the day when the government works for us, not against us.

■ Our children deserve an America filled with opportunity and hope. A balanced budget amendment would free our children from the burden of paying for Washington's inability to control spending.

Supporters can take comfort in the fact that all 55 Republicans—even when faced with the prospect of almost certain defeat—kept their word and voted for the balanced budget amendment. President Clinton lobbied hard against the amendment, which places pressure on him to keep his word and produce a budget that is balanced and will stay balanced without gimmicks.

But, so far, there is reason to be skeptical. The day before the balanced budget vote in the Senate, budget experts announced the Clinton budget was far from being in balance. Even President Clinton's own budget predicts the deficit—under his plan—would go up next year and

not come close to disappearing until after he leaves office.

The president's January budget proposal calls for America to spend \$9 trillion over the next five years—\$586 billion more than America will take in. Rather than achieving a balanced budget, the plan will produce a deficit of \$69 billion in 2002, according to the Congressional Budget Office. Worse, the president's plan likely wouldn't even come that close to balancing the budget.

The president's proposal puts off most of the budget cuts—98.5 percent of all reductions—until after President Clinton leaves office. It makes unrealistic assumptions about revenues and costs and reaches balance only by phasing out early year tax cuts, while keeping in place proposed tax hikes.

Sometimes it is hard to imagine just what deficit spending means. But the president's \$586 billion of additional debt over the next five years would cause each man, woman, and child in America to owe another \$2,200 to the government, on top of the \$19,100 per person they already owe, if America was to pay off its \$5.1 trillion-plus national debt tomorrow.

As long as the era of big government still lurks in the shadows, there is hope that one more senator will do the right thing and give us that final vote for passage of a balanced budget amendment.

We can't give up and we won't. It's the only way to make certain the era of big government is truly over—for good.

Sen. Frank Murkowski represents Alaska in the U.S. Senate. He was first elected in 1980.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

AIDS can make it a death
ce.

Under what advice the pro-
als might give. What ad-
rmer inmates might give.
advice their family mem-
might give. I'd like to learn
through talk shows and the
Miner.

Under why people are not
sensitive to the agony of
we have imprisoned and

E.P. Morgan
Fairbanks

Lopsided battle

March 28, 1997

To the editor:

The Local page article de-
picting protesters against
spending cuts on March 27 was
overly generous in assessing 100
participants. I saw about six
kooks who came close to causing
numerous near and accidents as

dollar short) can actually influ-
ence last fall's clear mandate to
Rep. Therriault to cut the budget
to the bone, he better be sending
resumes to the hopefully sober
political science department for a
new job. The majority of Alaskan
voters have already figured out
that all the king's horses and all
the king's men are covered with
rotten eggs.

Regards,
John Townsend

This letter is to the skier wh
caused the tangle which resulte
in Axel Glasser losing his do
team during the second heat o
the North American Champior
ship dog race. Your ignorance fo
placing yourself in a position t
be involved in this type of situ-
tion is understandable. Evidentl
there are many people like you
who turn out every year durin
the North American dog races, s

4/8/97
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News Miner



NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES

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JANE L. CAMPBELL
ASSISTANT MINORITY LEADER
OHIO
PRESIDENT, NCSL

January 17, 1995

Honorable Al Vezey
House Majority Leader
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 102
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

TED FERRIS
DIRECTOR, JOINT LEGISLATIVE
BUDGET COMMITTEE
ARIZONA
STAFF CHAIR, NCSL

WILLIAM POUND
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Representative Vezey:

It appears likely that Congress will be sending a balanced budget amendment to state legislatures for ratification over the next several weeks. NCSL policy supports a balanced federal budget but also says that the interests of state governments should be recognized and protected in any plan.

We believe it is important that any balanced budget amendment contain language to protect states from cost shifting and additional unfunded mandates. We have been working with key congressional members on this issue and are pleased that we have received growing support for our concerns.

In an effort to better acquaint the public and the media with the potential effects of a federal balanced budget amendment on states, NCSL has drafted the attached op-ed piece for your use. We urge you to submit the piece to your local papers and suggest that you do so on a bipartisan basis. Please feel free to edit the piece as appropriate for your use.

Please contact us if you have any questions about NCSL's efforts on this issue. If you need any assistance on media efforts, contact Susan Seladones in NCSL's Public Affairs Office at 202-624-5400.

Sincerely,

Jane L. Campbell
President, NCSL
Assistant House Minority Leader, Ohio

Sincerely,

James J. Lack
President-Elect, NCSL
New York Senate

A L A S K A



NFIB
National Federation of
Independent Business

National Federation of Independent Business

Statement of Support for HJR 16

**A Resolution in Support of the Federal
Balanced Budget Amendment**

March 3, 1997

The Alaska Chapter of the National Federation of Independent Business has 4,400 members, making it the largest small-business advocacy group in the state.

Small business owners have voted overwhelmingly for a balanced budget in several NFIB issue ballots. In addition, they have voted repeatedly for deficit reduction. Small businesses believe that the balanced budget amendment is necessary to force Congress to make responsible decisions on deficit reduction.

The National Federation of Independent Business has lobbied hard for the Balanced Budget Amendment to the US Constitution. Following is an excerpt from NFIB testimony before the US Senate Judiciary Committee:

Small business owners believe that the federal government should learn to live within its means. Ever-growing deficits have imperiled our financial security. As deficits increase, the availability and cost of capital increase. Large deficits absorb a significant portion of the available capital. As a result, private enterprises are crowded out of the pool of available capital for financing, and small businesses feel the impact even more since they have fewer financing alternatives.

To sum up, small business owners are frustrated and angry that their government officials cannot restrain their spending impulses. Therefore, the balanced budget is necessary to force federal officials to act responsibly.

NFIB/Alaska urges support for HJR 16.