

By: Escobar

H.J.R. No. 29

A JOINT RESOLUTION

1 proposing a constitutional amendment establishing minimum
2 standards of state support and equity for the public school finance
3 system and restricting the purposes for which money necessary to
4 meet those standards may be appropriated.

5 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

6 SECTION 1. Section 1, Article VII, Texas Constitution, is
7 amended to read as follows:

8 Sec. 1. (a) A general diffusion of knowledge being
9 essential to the preservation of the liberties and rights of the
10 people, it shall be the duty of the Legislature of the State to
11 establish and make suitable provision for the support and
12 maintenance of an efficient system of public free schools. In
13 complying with this section, the Legislature shall:

14 (1) provide state funding in an amount constituting at
15 least 50 percent of the cost of maintaining and operating the public
16 school system; and

17 (2) ensure that in any State fiscal year at least 98
18 percent of the public school students in this State attend schools
19 in school districts that have equal access to the same level of
20 funding per student.

21 (b) Before each regular session of the Legislature, the
22 comptroller of public accounts shall estimate the amount of State
23 funding required, under current State laws relating to school
24 funding, to comply with Subsection (a) of this section and shall

1 certify that amount to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and
2 the speaker of the house of representatives. In the State fiscal
3 biennium following the regular legislative session for which the
4 certification is made, the comptroller of public accounts shall
5 transfer to a special account in the state treasury on the first day
6 of each month an amount equal to one-twelfth of the amount certified
7 under this subsection. Amounts transferred to the special fund may
8 be appropriated only for purposes of funding public schools, except
9 that in the case of a fiscal emergency, the Legislature, by a vote
10 of four-fifths of the membership of each house, may appropriate not
11 more than 10 percent of the money to be transferred to the special
12 fund for a purpose other than funding public schools.

13 SECTION 2. This proposed constitutional amendment shall be
14 submitted to the voters at an election to be held November 8, 2005.
15 The ballot shall be printed to permit voting for or against the
16 proposition: "The constitutional amendment establishing minimum
17 standards of state support and equity for the public school finance
18 system and restricting the purposes for which money necessary to
19 meet those standards may be appropriated."