

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 18

INTRODUCED BY F. THOMAS

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4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
 5 MONTANA URGING THE MONTANA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE
 6 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO INITIATE A PROCESS WHEREIN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MUST
 7 ~~ANNUALLY PRODUCE A BALANCED BUDGET;~~ ANNUALLY PRODUCE A BALANCED BUDGET, LOWER
 8 ~~ANNUAL~~ ANNUAL FEDERAL DEFICIT SPENDING LEVELS;¹ AND REDUCE THE NATIONAL DEBT.

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10 ~~WHEREAS, the fiscal policies of the United States federal government have placed our country on an~~
 11 ~~untenable path, creating unprecedented debt, hindering job creation, and threatening future generations of~~
 12 ~~Montanans with a bleak future; and~~

13 ~~WHEREAS, high levels of debt directly threaten the ability of a government to control its own budget~~
 14 ~~priorities; and~~

15 ~~WHEREAS, our nation's fiscal crisis threatens our economy and national security, has contributed to a~~
 16 ~~loss of trust in government, and exposes individual states to dire economic times; and~~

17 ~~WHEREAS, the federal government in 2011 raised the debt ceiling to prevent the United States from~~
 18 ~~facing its first ever default; and~~

19 ~~WHEREAS, the interest expense on our national debt exceeds \$151 billion for fiscal year 2013, and by~~
 20 ~~2023, interest on the national debt is estimated to be nearly \$900 billion; and~~

21 ~~WHEREAS, payments on our nation's debt exceed \$200 billion annually, and as a result, the credit rating~~
 22 ~~of the United States in 2011 was lowered for the first time; and~~

23 ~~WHEREAS, by borrowing revenue from the future and spending it today, our nation's debt is being~~
 24 ~~passed on to future generations who have no say in the decisionmaking process; and~~

25 ~~WHEREAS, passing our debt to the next generation is contradictory to the American principle of leaving~~
 26 ~~our nation, states, and local communities in better shape than we found them; and~~

27 ~~WHEREAS, the federal debt threatens the livelihood of Montana's veterans; and~~

28 ~~WHEREAS, the federal cost of Medicaid expansion across all states is projected to add \$931 billion or~~
 29 ~~nearly \$1 trillion to the national debt; and~~

30 WHEREAS, THE FISCAL POLICIES OF THE UNITED STATES FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAVE PLACED OUR COUNTRY

1 ON AN UNTENABLE PATH, CREATING UNPRECEDENTED DEBT, HINDERING JOB CREATION, AND THREATENING FUTURE
 2 GENERATIONS OF MONTANANS WITH A BLEAK FUTURE; AND

3 WHEREAS, HIGH LEVELS OF DEBT DIRECTLY THREATEN THE ABILITY OF A GOVERNMENT TO CONTROL ITS OWN
 4 BUDGET PRIORITIES; AND

5 WHEREAS, OUR NATION'S FISCAL CRISIS THREATENS OUR ECONOMY AND NATIONAL SECURITY, HAS
 6 CONTRIBUTED TO A LOSS OF TRUST IN GOVERNMENT, AND EXPOSES INDIVIDUAL STATES TO DIRE ECONOMIC TIMES; AND

7 WHEREAS, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN 2011 RAISED THE DEBT CEILING TO PREVENT THE UNITED STATES
 8 FROM FACING ITS FIRST EVER DEFAULT; AND

9 WHEREAS, THE INTEREST EXPENSE ON OUR NATIONAL DEBT EXCEEDS \$151 BILLION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013,
 10 AND BY 2023, INTEREST ON THE NATIONAL DEBT IS ESTIMATED TO BE NEARLY \$900 BILLION; AND

11 WHEREAS, PAYMENTS ON OUR NATION'S DEBT EXCEED \$200 BILLION ANNUALLY, AND AS A RESULT, THE CREDIT
 12 RATING OF THE UNITED STATES IN 2011 WAS LOWERED FOR THE FIRST TIME; AND

13 WHEREAS, BY BORROWING REVENUE FROM THE FUTURE AND SPENDING IT TODAY, OUR NATION'S DEBT IS BEING
 14 PASSED ON TO FUTURE GENERATIONS WHO HAVE NO SAY IN THE DECISIONMAKING PROCESS; AND

15 WHEREAS, PASSING OUR DEBT TO THE NEXT GENERATION IS CONTRADICTORY TO THE AMERICAN PRINCIPLE
 16 OF LEAVING OUR NATION, STATES, AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN BETTER SHAPE THAN WE FOUND THEM; AND

17 WHEREAS, THE FEDERAL DEBT THREATENS THE LIVELIHOOD OF MONTANA'S VETERANS; AND

18 WHEREAS, THE FEDERAL COST OF MEDICAID EXPANSION ACROSS ALL STATES IS PROJECTED TO ADD \$931
 19 BILLION OR NEARLY \$1 TRILLION TO THE NATIONAL DEBT; AND

20 WHEREAS, Montana and 48 other states are required by law to pass balanced budgets; and

21 WHEREAS, nearly all states are constitutionally required to produce balanced budgets, and although
 22 economic conditions vary and demand for government services may increase, leaders are required to make
 23 difficult decisions in accordance with the fundamental principles of fiscal prudence; and

24 ~~WHEREAS, the people of Montana expect and demand the same of our federal government; and~~

25 ~~WHEREAS, the federal government has failed to approve a budget since 2009 and has not produced~~
 26 ~~a balanced budget since 2001; a budget is not only a constitutional requirement, it is a fundamental responsibility~~
 27 ~~and a reflection of principles and vision; and~~

28 WHEREAS, THE PEOPLE OF MONTANA EXPECT AND DEMAND THE SAME OF OUR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT; AND

29 WHEREAS, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS FAILED TO APPROVE A BUDGET SINCE 2009 AND HAS NOT
 30 PRODUCED A BALANCED BUDGET SINCE 2001; A BUDGET IS NOT ONLY A CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENT, IT IS A

1 FUNDAMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY AND A REFLECTION OF PRINCIPLES AND VISION; AND

2 WHEREAS, that which cannot continue, will not.

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4 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
5 STATE OF MONTANA:

6 That the Legislature of the State of Montana hereby calls upon the Montana Congressional Delegation
7 and the President of the United States of America to initiate a process wherein the federal government must
8 ~~annually produce a balanced budget,~~ ANNUALLY PRODUCE A BALANCED BUDGET, lower ~~annual~~ ANNUAL federal deficit
9 spending levels, and reduce the national debt.

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send a copy of this resolution to each member
11 of the Montana Congressional Delegation and the President of the United States.

12 - END -