

# State of Vermont House of Representatives

Montpelier, Vermont



## Joint House Resolution

J.R.H. 10

Joint resolution relating to the FY 2016 State financial shortfall and long-term budgetary structuring

Offered by: Representatives Bancroft of Westford, Baser of Bristol, Batchelor of Derby, Dame of Essex, Dickinson of St. Albans Town, Donahue of Northfield, Gage of Rutland City, Gamache of Swanton, Higley of Lowell, Hubert of Milton, LaClair of Barre Town, Lefebvre of Newark, Martel of Waterford, Morrissey of Bennington, Myers of Essex, Parent of St. Albans City, Quimby of Concord, Strong of Albany, Terenzini of Rutland Town, Turner of Milton, Viens of Newport City, and Willhoit of St. Johnsbury

Whereas, the State's financial outlook for the upcoming fiscal year (FY) 2016 (beginning July 1, 2015) is grim, and

Whereas, were the General Assembly to appropriate money to maintain General Fund spending in FY 2016 at current service levels, the Joint Fiscal Office (JFO) now projects a shortfall of \$113.2 million would result, and

Whereas, JFO also estimates that from FY 2017–2020 the comparable annual General Fund shortfall would range from \$96 to \$130 million, and

Whereas, it is imperative that the State of Vermont reorder its budgetary priorities and adopt a far more restrained approach to General Fund expenditures, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly must follow these budgetary principles in adopting the FY 2016 General Fund budget:

First: General Fund appropriations will be level funded based on the FY 2015 postrecession level;

Second: No new State programs will be started as Vermont cannot afford the current State programs;

Third: No current program's eligibility base should be expanded, including property tax payments based on income sensitivity, LIHEAP funding, and Vermont Health Connect subsidization;

Fourth: The Governor's proposal to add approximately \$25 million in new health spending, requiring a new revenue source, is not fiscally sustainable;

Fifth: If a new State government position is absolutely necessary, it should only be established if a current position is eliminated, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the House Committee on Appropriations, the House Committee on Ways and Means, the Senate Committee on Appropriations, the Senate Committee on Finance, and to Governor Peter Shumlin.