

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST REGULAR SESSION

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ONE HUNDRED AND NINTH LEGISLATURE

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**Legislative Document**

**No. 963**

S. P. 327

In Senate, March 6, 1979

Referred to the Committee on Judiciary. Sent down for concurrence and 2,000 ordered printed.

Presented by Senator Chapman of Sagadahoc.

Cosponsors: Senators Ault of Kennebec, Collins of Knox and Gill of Cumberland.

MAY M. ROSS, Secretary of the Senate

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STATE OF MAINE

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IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED  
SEVENTY-NINE

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JOINT RESOLUTION MAKING APPLICATION TO CONGRESS  
CALLING A CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION TO PROPOSE  
AN AMENDMENT TO THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION  
TO REQUIRE, WITH CERTAIN EXCEPTIONS,  
THAT THE FEDERAL BUDGET BE BALANCED

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Whereas, with each passing year this Nation becomes more deeply in debt as its expenditures grossly and repeatedly exceed available revenues so that the public debt now exceeds hundreds of billions of dollars; and

Whereas, the annual federal budget continually demonstrates an unwillingness or inability of both the legislative and executive branches of the Federal Government to curtail spending to conform to available revenues; and

Whereas, unified budgets do not reflect actual spending because of the exclusion of special outlays which are not included in the budget nor subject to the legal public debt limit; and

Whereas, knowledgeable planning, fiscal prudence and plain good sense require that the budget reflect all federal spending and be in balance; and

Whereas, believing that fiscal irresponsibility at the federal level, with the

inflation which results from this policy, is the greatest threat which faces our Nation, we firmly believe that constitutional restraint is necessary to bring the fiscal discipline needed to restore financial responsibility; and

Whereas, under the United States Constitution, Article V, the Congress, whenever two-thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to the Constitution, or, on the application of the legislatures of two-thirds of the several states, shall call a convention for proposing amendments which, in either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of the Constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several states, or by conventions in three-fourths thereof, as the one or the other mode of ratification may be proposed by the Congress; and

Whereas, we believe action on amendments to the Constitution concerning federal expenditures to be vital; now, therefore, be it

Resolved: That this body respectfully applies to the Congress of the United States to call a convention for the specific and exclusive purpose of proposing an amendment to the United States Constitution to require a balanced federal budget and to make certain exceptions with respect thereto; and be it further

Resolved: That this application by this body constitutes a continuing application in accordance with Article V of the Constitution of the United States until at least two-thirds of the legislatures of the several states have made similar applications pursuant to Article V, but if Congress proposes an amendment to the Constitution identical in subject matter to that contained in this Joint Resolution, then this application for a constitutional convention shall no longer be of any force or effect; and be it further

Resolved: That this application and request be deemed null and void, rescinded and of no effect in the event that such convention not be limited to such specific and exclusive purpose; and be it further

Resolved: That this body also proposes that the legislatures of each of the several states comprising the United States apply to the Congress requesting the enactment of an appropriate amendment to the Federal Constitution; or requiring the Congress to call a constitutional convention for proposing such an amendment to the Federal Constitution; and be it further

Resolved: That duly authenticated copies of this resolution be immediately sent by the Secretary of State to the Secretary of the Senate and presiding officers of both Houses of the legislatures of each of the several states in the Nation, the Speaker and the Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, the President and the Secretary of the United States Senate and to each member of the State of Maine Congressional delegation.