

April 10, 2018

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U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 1.6 million members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), I am writing to urge you to vote no on H.J. Res. 2 and to reject this and any other effort to amend the U.S. Constitution to require a balanced budget.

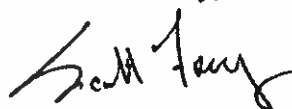
The proposed constitutional amendment is a draconian and unwise proposal that would damage the economy, result in huge job losses and weaken vital public services that all Americans depend upon. It unwisely requires outlays to match receipts each year regardless of economic conditions, a supermajority vote of three-fifths to increase the debt ceiling with limited exceptions for outlays to exceed receipts only in times of war, but not during recessions or disasters.

H. J. Res. 2 is a false attempt to claim fiscal responsibility on the heels of a reckless tax cut that is projected to cause the deficit to skyrocket to \$1.9 trillion over the next decade, according to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), and to exceed \$2.5 trillion if its tax policies are extended. The tax cut for the wealthy and big corporations irresponsibly forced revenues to their lowest levels since 1956, an unsustainable level far below what is needed to support programs that provide basic needs for struggling families, to promote economic growth and meet other critical needs like investing in infrastructure and education.

H.J. Res. 2 would irresponsibly require a supermajority vote to lift the debt ceiling, an already difficult vote that subjects the U.S. and worldwide economies to instability and potential economic destruction. Further, requiring a balanced budget annually would take away the ability to respond to changing economic conditions and raise serious risks of tipping weak economies into recession and making recessions longer and deeper. Most egregious, H.J. Res. 2 is a thinly veiled attempt to force drastic changes to Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and veterans' benefits that Americans earn and depend on.

H.J. Res. 2 is a dangerous and fiscally irresponsible political maneuver. AFSCME urges you to reject this politically motivated and dangerous proposal.

Sincerely,



Scott Frey
Director of Federal Government Affairs

SF:BL:rf

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

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