

CAPITOL REPORT

**Representative
Jay Wasson
District 141**

February 15, 2010

House Approves Federal Balanced Budget Resolution

Congress continues to add billions, now trillions, of dollars annually to our federal debt. Because the federal government is not constitutionally required to pass annual balanced budgets, like 49 out of the 50 states, this process has continued to spiral out of control.

The federal debt now exceeds 12 trillion dollars and Congress has shown no interest in putting a stop to this dangerous trend. That is why the Missouri House of Representatives approved a resolution that calls for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to require a federal balanced budget. The House approved HCR 34 and 35 by a vote of 121-28.

This is not a new concept, it has been around for quite some time – the concern nationally for out of control spending no matter what party is in the White House and no matter what party is in the federal Senate or the federal House. It is a common sense issue and the time has come for us to get earmarks under control, our defense spending under control, our subsidies under control and start doing right by the American people.

We must stop this trend of out-of-control deficit spending that passes the cost of our projects and programs on to our children and grandchildren. The federal government needs to live within its means just as the states do because, as we all know, it is impossible to borrow your way to prosperity or to spend your way to prosperity as a federal government.

The most important reason we passed the resolution was to limit the power of the federal government. A government which can spend without restriction can gather power without limit. And the federal government, primarily because of its ability to spend, has expanded its power exponentially beyond what the founders intended.

The greatest threat to the liberty of the American people is a Congress that can spend without limitation.

If passed by the Senate, Missouri will be the 32nd state of the 34 needed to force Congress to send a Constitutional Amendment to the states for ratification.

Other legislative action last week included the House voting on HB 1497 requiring special elections to fill vacancies in the offices of Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, State Auditor, State Treasurer, and United States Senator.

Currently, a vacancy in the Office of United States Senator and most statewide offices, except for the Office of the governor, are filled by gubernatorial appointment. The Lieutenant Governor becomes Governor if that office becomes open.

These offices seldom come open between elections. Even so, we would never want Missouri to follow in the way of Illinois' Governor Blagojevich when he attempted to sell his state's U.S. Senate seat.

This bill reinforces that officeholders are named by the will of the people. I voted for this bill, which passed overwhelmingly.

Members of the House heard testimony last week on a piece of legislation that would make the components of a new synthetic drug, commonly referred to as K2, illegal. The legislation comes in response to what is a growing problem.

K2 is a synthetic marijuana substitute that has become popular in recent months. The Missouri State Highway Patrol and Police Departments testified in favor of the bill noting that many users of K2 have indicated its effect is even stronger than the effect produced by marijuana.

They also expressed concern over the fact that anyone with money to purchase K2 can do so regardless of age. A ten year-old child could walk into a shop and buy it because it is not tobacco. It is incense. It would be no different from buying potpourri at a store.

We need to deal with this now before it becomes an epidemic. It is not just a Missouri thing, but Missouri needs to be at the forefront and take action to ban K2.

Copies of the Missouri Manual (Blue Book) are still available. Call (417) 725-0619 or email: jay.wasson@house.mo.gov.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you.

Jay Wasson

