LC002425

2021 -- S 0595

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

JOINT RESOLUTION

TO APPROVE AND PUBLISH AND SUBMIT TO THE ELECTORS A PROPOSITION OF AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE

Introduced By: Senator Samuel W. Bell

Date Introduced: March 11, 2021

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

1	RESOLVED, That a majority of all members elected to each house of the general
2	assembly voting therefor, the following amendments to the Constitution of the state be proposed
3	to the qualified electors of the state in accordance with the provisions of Article XIV of the
4	Constitution, for their approval and the following sections are hereby amended, effective on
5	January 1, 2023, to read as follows:
6	ARTICLE VI
7	OF THE LEGISLATIVE POWER
8	Section 16. Borrowing power of general assembly.
9	(a) The general assembly shall approve all debt that pledges the general obligation of the
10	state.
11	The general assembly shall have no powers, without the express consent of the people, to
12	incur state debts to an amount exceeding fifty thousand dollars, except in time of war, or in case
13	of insurrection or invasion; nor shall it in any case, without such consent, pledge the faith of the
14	state for the payment of the obligations of others. This section shall not be construed to refer to
15	any money that may be deposited with the state by the government of the United States.
16	(b) The general assembly shall have no powers, without the express consent of the
17	people, to fail to make an appropriation to fully fund actuarially required contributions to any
18	state pension fund. Should legislation appropriating said funds not pass by the beginning of the
19	fiscal year, the funds shall be automatically appropriated.

1 (c) The general assembly shall have no powers, without the express consent of the 2 people, to issue any bonds not subject to a pledge of the general obligation of the state, including 3 private activity bonds, nor shall the general assembly, without the express consent of the people, 4 have the power to enter into any public-private partnership to finance capital expenditures. This 5 section shall not be construed to refer to any money that may be deposited with the state by the 6 government of the United States. 7 RESOLVED, That the said proposition of amendments shall be submitted to the electors 8 for their approval or rejection at the next statewide general election. The voting places in the

9 several cities and towns shall be kept open during the hours required by law for voting therein for10 general officers of the state; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the secretary of state shall cause the said proposition of amendments 12 to be published as a part of this resolution in the newspapers of the state prior to the date of the 13 said meetings of the said electors; and the said proposition shall be inserted in the warrants or 14 notices to be issued previous to said meetings of the electors for the purpose of warning the town, 15 ward, or district meetings, and said proposition shall be read by the town, ward, or district 16 meetings to be held as aforesaid; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the town, ward, and district meetings to be held aforesaid shall be -18 warned, and the list of voters shall be canvassed and made up, and the said town, ward, and 19 district meetings shall be conducted in the same manner as now provided by law for the town, 20 ward, and district meetings for the election of general officers of the state.

LC002425

EXPLANATION

BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

OF

JOINT RESOLUTION

TO APPROVE AND PUBLISH AND SUBMIT TO THE ELECTORS A PROPOSITION OF AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE

1	This act would provide for a joint resolution to approve and publish a proposition for a
2	constitutional amendment which specifies that all debt that pledges the general obligation of the
3	state be approved by the general assembly. This proposed constitutional amendment would also
4	require voter approval for appropriations less than the actuarially required contributions to any
5	state pension fund or for payment on any bond not subject to a pledge of the general obligation of
6	the state.

LC002425