PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

H.J.R. 31, § 1

the tuition and required fees of a private or independent institution of higher education in which a beneficiary enrolls as provided by a prepaid tuition contract, there is appropriated out of the first money coming into the state treasury in each fiscal year not otherwise appropriated by the constitution the amount that is sufficient to pay the applicable amount of tuition and required fees of the institution.

(c) Assets of the fund may be invested by an entity designated by general law in securities considered prudent investments. Investments shall be made in the exercise of judgment and care under the circumstances that a person of ordinary prudence, discretion, and intelligence exercises in the management of the person's affairs, not for speculation, but for the permanent disposition of funds, considering the probable income from the disposition as well as the probable safety of capital.

(d) The state comptroller of public accounts shall take the actions necessary to implement this section.

(e) To the extent this section conflicts with any other provision of this constitution, this section controls.

SECTION 2. This proposed constitutional amendment shall be submitted to the voters at an election to be held November 4, 1997. The ballot shall be printed to permit voting for or against the proposition: "The constitutional amendment to encourage persons to plan and save for young Texans' college education, to extend the full faith and credit of the state to protect the Texas tomorrow fund of the prepaid higher education tuition program, and to establish the Texas tomorrow fund as a constitutionally protected trust fund."

Passed by the House on March 10, 1997: Yeas 120, Nays 24, 1 present, not voting;
passed by the Senate on May 7, 1997: Yeas 21, Nays 9, 1 present, not voting.

Filed with the Secretary of State May 8, 1997.

H.J.R. No. 31

A JOINT RESOLUTION

proposing a constitutional amendment permitting an encumbrance against homestead property for certain extensions of equity credit.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 50, Article XVI, Texas Constitution, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 50. (a) The homestead of a family, or of a single adult person, shall be, and is hereby protected from forced sale, for the payment of all debts except for:

(1) the purchase money thereof, or a part of such purchase money;

(2)[father or] the taxes due thereon;

(3)[an] an equity of partition imposed against the entirety of the property by a court order or by a written agreement of the parties to the partition, including a debt of one spouse in favor of the other spouse resulting from a division or an award of a family homestead in a divorce proceeding;

(4)[the] the refinancing of a lien against a homestead, including a federal tax lien resulting from the tax debt of both spouses, if the homestead is a family homestead, or from the tax debt of the owner;

(5)[—as—] work and material used in constructing new improvements thereon, if contracted for in writing, or work and material used to repair or renovate existing improvements thereon if:

(A) [and in this last case only when] the work and material are contracted for in writing, with the consent of both spouses, in the case of a family homestead, given in the same manner as is required in making a sale and conveyance of the homestead;

(B) the contract for the work and material is not executed by the owner or the owner's spouse before the 18th day after the owner makes written application for any extension
of credit for the work and material, unless the work and material are necessary to complete immediate repairs to conditions on the homestead property that materially affect the health or safety of the owner or person residing in the homestead and the owner of the homestead acknowledges such in writing;

(C) the contract for the work and material expressly provides that the owner may rescind the contract without penalty or charge within three days after the execution of the contract by all parties, unless the work and material are necessary to complete immediate repairs to conditions on the homestead property that materially affect the health or safety of the owner or person residing in the homestead and the owner of the homestead acknowledges such in writing; and

(D) the contract for the work and material is executed by the owner and the owner's spouse only at the office of a third-party lender making an extension of credit for the work and material, an attorney at law, or a title company;

(6) an extension of credit that:

(A) is secured by a voluntary lien on the homestead created under a written agreement with the consent of each owner and each owner's spouse;

(B) is of a principal amount that when added to the aggregate total of the outstanding principal balances of all other indebtedness secured by valid encumbrances of record against the homestead does not exceed 80 percent of the fair market value of the homestead on the date the extension of credit is made;

(C) is without recourse for personal liability against each owner and the spouse of each owner, unless the owner or spouse obtained the extension of credit by actual fraud;

(D) is secured by a lien that may be foreclosed upon only by a court order;

(E) does not require the owner or the owner's spouse to pay, in addition to any interest, fees to any person that are necessary to originate, evaluate, maintain, record, insure, or service the extension of credit that exceed, in the aggregate, three percent of the original principal amount of the extension of credit;

(F) is not a form of open-end account that may be debited from time to time or under which credit may be extended from time to time;

(G) is payable in advance without penalty or other charge;

(H) is not secured by any additional real or personal property other than the homestead;

(I) is not secured by homestead property designated for agricultural use as provided by statutes governing property tax, unless such homestead property is used primarily for the production of milk;

(J) may not be accelerated because of a decrease in the market value of the homestead or because of the owner's default under other indebtedness not secured by a prior valid encumbrance against the homestead;

(K) is the only debt secured by the homestead at the time the extension of credit is made unless the other debt was made for a purpose described by Subsection (a)(1)–(a)(5) of this section;

(L) is scheduled to be repaid in substantially equal successive monthly installments beginning no later than two months from the date the extension of credit is made, each of which equals or exceeds the amount of accrued interest as of the date of the scheduled installment;

(M) is closed not before:

(i) the 15th day after the later of the date that the owner of the homestead submits an application to the lender for the extension of credit or the date that the lender provides the owner a copy of the notice prescribed by Subsection (g) of this section; and

(ii) the first anniversary of the closing date of any other extension of credit described by Subsection (a)(6) of this section secured by the same homestead property;

(N) is closed only at the office of the lender, an attorney at law, or a title company;
(O) permits a lender to contract for and receive any fixed or variable rate of interest authorized under statute;

(P) is made by one of the following that has not been found by a federal regulatory agency to have engaged in the practice of refusing to make loans because the applicants for the loans reside or the property proposed to secure the loans is located in a certain area:

(i) a bank, savings and loan association, savings bank, or credit union doing business under the laws of this state or the United States;

(ii) a federally chartered lending instrumentality or a person approved as a mortgagee by the United States government to make federally insured loans;

(iii) a person licensed to make regulated loans, as provided by statute of this state;

(iv) a person who sold the homestead property to the current owner and who provided all or part of the financing for the purchase; or

(v) a person who is related to the homestead property owner within the second degree of affinity or consanguinity; and

(Q) is made on the condition that:

(i) the owner of the homestead is not required to apply the proceeds of the extension of credit to repay another debt except debt secured by the homestead or debt to another lender;

(ii) the owner of the homestead not assign wages as security for the extension of credit;

(iii) the owner of the homestead not sign any instrument in which blanks are left to be filled in;

(iv) the owner of the homestead not sign a confession of judgment or power of attorney to the lender or to a third person to confess judgment or to appear for the owner in a judicial proceeding;

(v) the lender, at the time the extension of credit is made, provide the owner of the homestead a copy of all documents signed by the owner related to the extension of credit;

(vi) the security instruments securing the extension of credit contain a disclosure that the extension of credit is the type of credit defined by Section 50(a)(6), Article XVI, Texas Constitution;

(vii) within a reasonable time after termination and full payment of the extension of credit, the lender cancel and return the promissory note to the owner of the homestead and give the owner, in recordable form, a release of the lien securing the extension of credit or a copy of an endorsement and assignment of the lien to a lender that is refinancing the extension of credit;

(viii) the owner of the homestead and any spouse of the owner may, within three days after the extension of credit is made, rescind the extension of credit without penalty or charge;

(ix) the owner of the homestead and the lender sign a written acknowledgment as to the fair market value of the homestead property on the date the extension of credit is made; and

(x) the lender or any holder of the note for the extension of credit shall forfeit all principal and interest of the extension of credit if the lender or holder fails to comply with the lender's or holder's obligations under the extension of credit within a reasonable time after the lender or holder is notified by the borrower of the lender's failure to comply; or

(7) a reverse mortgage.

(b) An [see may the] owner or claimant of the property claimed as homestead may not [unmarried] sell or abandon the homestead without the consent of each owner and the [spouse] spouse of each owner, given in such manner as may be prescribed by law.
(c) No mortgage, trust deed, or other lien on the homestead shall ever be valid unless it secures a debt described by this section, except for a debt described in Subsection (a)(6) of this section, whether such mortgage, trust deed, or other lien, shall have been created by the owner alone, or together with his or her spouse, in case the owner is married. All pretended sales of the homestead involving any condition of defeasance shall be void.

(d) A purchaser or lender for value without actual knowledge may conclusively rely on an affidavit that designates other property as the homestead of the affiant and that states that the property to be conveyed or encumbered is not the homestead of the affiant.

(e) A refinance of debt secured by a homestead and described by any subsection under Subsections (a)(1)-(a)(5) that includes the advance of additional funds may not be secured by a valid lien against the homestead unless:

(1) the refinance of the debt is an extension of credit described by Subsection (a)(6) of this section; or

(2) the advance of all the additional funds is for reasonable costs necessary to refinance such debt or for a purpose described by Subsection (a)(6), (a)(8), or (a)(9) of this section.

(f) A refinance of debt secured by the homestead, any portion of which is an extension of credit described by Subsection (a)(6) of this section, may not be secured by a valid lien against the homestead unless the refinance of the debt is an extension of credit described by Subsection (a)(6) of this section.

(g) An extension of credit described by Subsection (a)(6) of this section may be secured by a valid lien against homestead property if the extension of credit is not closed before the 18th day after the lender provides the owner with the following written notice on a separate instrument:

"NOTICE CONCERNING EXTENSIONS OF CREDIT DEFINED BY SECTION 50(a)(6), ARTICLE XVI, TEXAS CONSTITUTION:

"SECTION 50(a)(6), ARTICLE XVI, OF THE TEXAS CONSTITUTION ALLOWS CERTAIN LOANS TO BE SECURED AGAINST THE EQUITY IN YOUR HOME. SUCH LOANS ARE COMMONLY KNOWN AS EQUITY LOANS. IF YOU DO NOT REPAY THE LOAN OR IF YOU FAIL TO MEET THE TERMS OF THE LOAN, THE LENDER MAY FORECLOSE AND SELL YOUR HOME. THE CONSTITUTION PROVIDES THAT:

"(A) THE LOAN MUST BE VOLUNTARILY CREATED WITH THE CONSENT OF EACH OWNER OF YOUR HOME AND EACH OWNER'S SPOUSE;

"(B) THE PRINCIPAL LOAN AMOUNT AT THE TIME THE LOAN IS MADE MUST NOT EXCEED AN AMOUNT THAT, WHEN ADDED TO THE PRINCIPAL BALANCES OF ALL OTHER LIENS AGAINST YOUR HOME, IS MORE THAN 80 PERCENT OF THE FAIR MARKET VALUE OF YOUR HOME;

"(C) THE LOAN MUST BE WITHOUT RECOURSE FOR PERSONAL LIABILITY AGAINST YOU AND YOUR SPOUSE UNLESS YOU OR YOUR SPOUSE OBTAINED THIS EXTENSION OF CREDIT BY ACTUAL FRAUD;

"(D) THE LIEN SECURING THE LOAN MAY BE FORECLOSED UPON ONLY WITH A COURT ORDER;

"(E) FEES AND CHARGES TO MAKE THE LOAN MAY NOT EXCEED 3 PERCENT OF THE LOAN AMOUNT;

"(F) THE LOAN MAY NOT BE AN OPEN-END ACCOUNT THAT MAY BE DEBITED FROM TIME TO TIME OR UNDER WHICH CREDIT MAY BE EXTENDED FROM TIME TO TIME;

"(G) YOU MAY PREPAY THE LOAN WITHOUT PENALTY OR CHARGE;

"(H) NO ADDITIONAL COLLATERAL MAY BE SECURITY FOR THE LOAN;

"(I) THE LOAN MAY NOT BE SECURED BY AGRICULTURAL HOMESTEAD PROPERTY, UNLESS THE AGRICULTURAL HOMESTEAD PROPERTY IS USED PRIMARILY FOR THE PRODUCTION OF MILK;"
PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

H.J.R. 31, § 1

“(J) YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO REPAY THE LOAN EARLIER THAN AGREED SOLELY BECAUSE THE FAIR MARKET VALUE OF YOUR HOME DECREASES OR BECAUSE YOU DEFAULT ON ANOTHER LOAN THAT IS NOT SECURED BY YOUR HOME;

“(K) ONLY ONE LOAN DESCRIBED BY SECTION 50(a)(6), ARTICLE XVI, OF THE TEXAS CONSTITUTION MAY BE SECURED WITH YOUR HOME AT ANY GIVEN TIME;

“(L) THE LOAN MUST BE SCHEDULED TO BE REPAYED IN PAYMENTS THAT EQUAL OR EXCEED THE AMOUNT OF ACCRUED INTEREST FOR EACH PAYMENT PERIOD;

“(M) THE LOAN MAY NOT CLOSE BEFORE 12 DAYS AFTER YOU SUBMIT A WRITTEN APPLICATION TO THE LENDER OR BEFORE 12 DAYS AFTER YOU RECEIVE THIS NOTICE, WHICHER DATE IS LATER; AND IF YOUR HOME WAS SECURITY FOR THE SAME TYPE OF LOAN WITHIN THE PAST YEAR, A NEW LOAN SECURED BY THE SAME PROPERTY MAY NOT CLOSE BEFORE ONE YEAR HAS PASSED FROM THE CLOSING DATE OF THE OTHER LOAN;

“(N) THE LOAN MAY CLOSE ONLY AT THE OFFICE OF THE LENDER, TITLE COMPANY, OR AN ATTORNEY AT LAW;

“(O) THE LENDER MAY CHARGE ANY FIXED OR VARIABLE RATE OF INTEREST AUTHORIZED BY STATUTE;

“(P) ONLY A LAWFULLY AUTHORIZED LENDER MAY MAKE LOANS DESCRIBED BY SECTION 50(a)(6), ARTICLE XVI, OF THE TEXAS CONSTITUTION; AND

“(Q) LOANS DESCRIBED BY SECTION 50(a)(6), ARTICLE XVI, OF THE TEXAS CONSTITUTION MUST:

“(1) NOT REQUIRE YOU TO APPLY THE PROCEEDS TO ANOTHER DEBT THAT IS NOT SECURED BY YOUR HOME OR TO ANOTHER DEBT TO THE SAME LENDER;

“(2) NOT REQUIRE THAT YOU ASSIGN WAGES AS SECURITY;

“(3) NOT REQUIRE THAT YOU EXECUTE INSTRUMENTS WHICH HAVE BLANKS LEFT TO BE FILLED IN;

“(4) NOT REQUIRE THAT YOU SIGN A CONFESSION OF JUDGMENT OR POWER OF ATTORNEY TO ANOTHER PERSON TO CONFESSION JUDGMENT OR APPEAR IN A LEGAL PROCEEDING ON YOUR BEHALF;

“(5) PROVIDE THAT YOU RECEIVE A COPY OF ALL DOCUMENTS YOU SIGN AT CLOSING;

“(6) PROVIDE THAT THE SECURITY INSTRUMENTS CONTAIN A DISCLOSURE THAT THIS LOAN IS A LOAN DEFINED BY SECTION 50(a)(6), ARTICLE XVI, OF THE TEXAS CONSTITUTION;

“(7) PROVIDE THAT WHEN THE LOAN IS PAID IN FULL, THE LENDER WILL SIGN AND GIVE YOU A RELEASE OF LIEN OR AN ASSIGNMENT OF THE LIEN, WHICHER IS APPROPRIATE;

“(8) PROVIDE THAT YOU MAY, WITHIN 3 DAYS AFTER CLOSING, RESCIND THE LOAN WITHOUT PENALTY OR CHARGE;

“(9) PROVIDE THAT YOU AND THE LENDER ACKNOWLEDGE THE FAIR MARKET VALUE OF YOUR HOME ON THE DATE THE LOAN CLOSES; AND

“(10) PROVIDE THAT THE LENDER WILL FORFEIT ALL PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST IF THE LENDER FAILS TO COMPLY WITH THE LENDER'S OBLIGATIONS.”

If the discussions with the borrower are conducted primarily in a language other than English, the lender shall, before closing, provide an additional copy of the notice translated into the written language in which the discussions were conducted.
(h) A lender or assignee for value may conclusively rely on the written acknowledgment as to the fair market value of the homestead property made in accordance with Subsection (a)(6)(B) of this section if:

(1) the value acknowledged is the value estimate in an appraisal or evaluation prepared in accordance with a state or federal requirement applicable to an extension of credit under Subsection (a)(6); and

(2) the lender or assignee does not have actual knowledge at the time of the payment of value or advance of funds by the lender or assignee that the fair market value stated in the written acknowledgment was incorrect.

(i) This subsection shall not affect or impair any right of the borrower to recover damages from the lender or assignee under applicable law for wrongful foreclosure. A purchaser for value without actual knowledge may conclusively presume that a lien securing an extension of credit described by Subsection (a)(6) of this section was a valid lien securing the extension of credit with homestead property if:

(1) the security instruments securing the extension of credit contain a disclosure that the extension of credit secured by the lien was the type of credit defined by Section 50(a)(6), Article XVI, Texas Constitution;  

(2) the purchaser acquires the title to the property pursuant to or after the foreclosure of the voluntary lien; and

(3) the purchaser is not the lender or assignee under the extension of credit.

(j) Subsection (a)(6) and Subsections (e)-(i) of this section are not severable, and none of those provisions would have been enacted without the others. If any of those provisions are held to be preempted by the laws of the United States, all of those provisions are invalid. This subsection shall not apply to any lien or extension of credit made after January 1, 1998, and before the date any provision under Subsection (a)(6) or Subsections (e)-(i) is held to be preempted.

(k) “Reverse mortgage” means an extension of credit:

(1) that is secured by a voluntary lien on homestead property created by a written agreement with the consent of each owner and each owner’s spouse;

(2) that is made to a person who is or whose spouse is 55 years or older;

(3) that is made without recourse for personal liability against each owner and the spouse of each owner;

(4) under which advances are provided to a borrower based on the equity in a borrower’s homestead;

(5) that does not permit the lender to reduce the amount or number of advances because of an adjustment in the interest rate if periodic advances are to be made;

(6) that requires no payment of principal or interest until:

(A) the homestead property securing the loan is sold or otherwise transferred; or

(B) all borrowers cease occupying the homestead property as a principal residence for more than 180 consecutive days and the location of the homestead property owner is unknown to the lender;

(7) that provides that if the lender fails to make loan advances as required in the loan documents and if the lender fails to cure the default as required in the loan documents, the lender forfeits all principal and interest of the reverse mortgage; and

(8) that is not made unless the owner of the homestead attests in writing that the owner received counseling regarding the advisability and availability of reverse mortgages and other financial alternatives.

(l) Advances made under a reverse mortgage and interest on those advances have priority over a lien filed for record in the real property records in the county where the homestead property is located after the reverse mortgage is filed for record in the real property records of that county.

(m) A reverse mortgage may provide for an interest rate that is fixed or adjustable and may also provide for interest that is contingent on appreciation in the fair market value of...
the homestead property. Although payment of principal or interest shall not be required under a reverse mortgage until the entire loan becomes due and payable, interest may accrue and be compounded during the term of the loan as provided by the reverse mortgage loan agreement.

(n) A reverse mortgage that is secured by a valid lien against homestead property may be made or acquired without regard to the following provisions of any other law of this state:

(1) a limitation on the purpose and use of future advances or other mortgage proceeds;
(2) a limitation on future advances to a term of years or a limitation on the term of open-end account advances;
(3) a limitation on the term during which future advances take priority over intervening advances;
(4) a requirement that a maximum loan amount be stated in the reverse mortgage loan documents;
(5) a prohibition on balloon payments;
(6) a prohibition on compound interest and interest on interest;
(7) a prohibition on contracting for, charging, or receiving any rate of interest authorized by any law of this state authorizing a lender to contract for a rate of interest; and
(8) a requirement that a percentage of the reverse mortgage proceeds be advanced before the assignment of the reverse mortgage.

(o) For the purposes of determining eligibility under any statute relating to payments, allowances, benefits, or services provided on a means-tested basis by this state, including supplemental security income, low-income energy assistance, property tax relief, medical assistance, and general assistance:

(1) reverse mortgage loan advances made to a borrower are considered proceeds from a loan and not income; and
(2) undistributed funds under a reverse mortgage loan are considered equity in a borrower's home and not proceeds from a loan.

(p) The advances made on a reverse mortgage loan under which more than one advance is made must be made at regular intervals according to a plan established by the original loan agreement.

(q) To the extent that any statutes of this state, including without limitation, Section 41.001 of the Texas Property Code, purport to limit encumbrances that may property be fixed on homestead property in a manner that does not permit encumbrances for extensions of credit described in Subsection (a)(6) or (a)(7) of this section, the same shall be superseded to the extent that such encumbrances shall be permitted to be fixed upon homestead property in the manner provided for by this amendment.

(r) The supreme court shall promulgate rules of civil procedure for expedited foreclosure proceedings related to the foreclosure of liens under Subsection (a)(6) of this section.

(s) The Finance Commission of Texas shall appoint a director to conduct research on the availability, quality, and prices of financial services and research the practices of business entities in the state that provide financial services under this section. The director shall collect information and produce reports on lending activity of those making loans under this section. The director shall report his or her findings to the legislature not later than December 1 of each year.

SECTION 2. The following temporary provision is added to the Texas Constitution:

TEMPORARY PROVISION. (a) This temporary provision applies to the constitutional amendment proposed by the 75th Legislature, Regular Session, 1997, authorizing a voluntary consensual encumbrance on homestead property.

(b) The constitutional amendment takes effect January 1, 1998.

(c) This temporary provision takes effect on the adoption of the amendment by the voters and expires January 1, 1998.

SECTION 3. This proposed constitutional amendment shall be submitted to the voters at an election to be held November 4, 1997. The ballot shall be printed to permit voting for or
against the proposition: "The amendment to the Texas Constitution expanding the types of liens for home equity loans that a lender, with the homeowner's consent, may place against a homestead."

Passed by the House on May 9, 1997: Yeas 112, Nays 36, 1 present, not voting; the House concurred in Senate amendments to H.J.R. No. 31 on May 26, 1997: Yeas 116, Nays 25, 2 present, not voting; the House adopted H.C.R. No. 326 authorizing certain corrections in H.J.R. No. 31 on May 31, 1997, by a non-record vote; passed the Senate, with amendments, on May 26, 1997: Yeas 22, Nays 7, 2 present, not voting; the Senate adopted H.C.R. No. 326 authorizing certain corrections in H.J.R. No. 31 on June 1, 1997, by a viva-voce vote.

Filed with the Secretary of State June 3, 1997.

H.J.R. No. 55

A JOINT RESOLUTION

proposing a constitutional amendment relating to a deadline for supreme court action on a motion for rehearing.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE Legislature of the State of Texas:

SECTION 1. Section 31, Article V, Texas Constitution, is amended by adding Subsection (d) to read as follows:

(d) Notwithstanding Section 1, Article II, of this constitution and any other provision of this constitution, if the supreme court does not act on a motion for rehearing before the 180th day after the date on which the motion is filed, the motion is denied.

SECTION 2. This proposed constitutional amendment shall be submitted to the voters at an election to be held November 4, 1997. The ballot shall be printed to provide for voting for or against the proposition: "The constitutional amendment to establish a deadline for supreme court action on a motion for rehearing."

Passed by the House on April 16, 1997: Yeas 145, Nays 0, 1 present, not voting; passed by the Senate on May 21, 1997: Yeas 30, Nays 0.

Filed with the Secretary of State May 22, 1997.

H.J.R. No. 59

A JOINT RESOLUTION

proposing a constitutional amendment limiting debt payable from the general revenue fund.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Article III, Texas Constitution, is amended by adding Section 49-j to read as follows:

Sec. 49-j. (a) The legislature may not authorize additional state debt if the resulting annual debt service exceeds the limitation imposed by this section. The maximum annual debt service in any fiscal year on state debt payable from the general revenue fund may not exceed five percent of an amount equal to the average of the amount of general revenue fund revenues, excluding revenues constitutionally dedicated for purposes other than payment of state debt, for the three preceding fiscal years.

(b) For purposes of this section, "state debt payable from the general revenue fund" means general obligation and revenue bonds, including authorized but unissued bonds, and lease-purchase agreements in an amount greater than $250,000, which bonds or lease purchase agreements are designed to be repaid with the general revenues of the state. The term does not include bonds that, although backed by the full faith or credit of the state, are reasonably expected to be paid from other revenue sources and that are not expected to create a general revenue draw. Bonds or lease purchase agreements that pledge the full faith and credit of