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Senator Hancock Files Legislation to Recalculate State Spending Limit

Bill, proposed constitutional amendment would provide stricter limits on government spending

AUSTIN - Today, Senator Kelly Hancock (R-North Richland Hills), filed Senate Bill 9 and Senate Joint Resolution 2 to reinforce the constitutional state spending limit.

"The people of Texas have made it clear that they want a fiscally responsible state government," said Hancock. "It is time to ensure that the constitutional spending limit is no longer just a theory, but an enacted measure of fiscal restraint."

SJR 2 and its enabling legislation, SB 9, would change the way the Legislative Budget Board calculates the state spending limit. This constitutionally-mandated limitation on state spending is meant to keep appropriations from growing faster than the state's economy. However, current law bases Texas' economic growth rate on personal income growth statistics. Since personal income typically grows at a faster rate than the overall economy, the spending limit is out of reach. The proposed legislation would direct the LBB to use a population plus inflation formula when calculating the spending limit, rather than personal income.

Hancock announced the legislation in a press conference at the State Capitol. Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick attended to voice his support for the stricter measures.

"This comprehensive approach to fiscal discipline is essential," Patrick stated. "Strengthening the spending cap formula from personal income to population plus inflation is a principle I supported with legislation, year after year, as a state senator. As Lieutenant Governor, I will put my full support behind Senator Hancock's effort to pass this much needed legislation."

SB 9 also provides necessary consistency in existing constitutional spending limits by aligning the spending limit with the pay as you go limit. This broadens the base to all funds rather than only applying the spending limit to constitutionally dedicated revenue. SJR 2 also increases the number of votes needed to exceed the spending limit. Currently, making an exception to the limit simply requires a majority approval in both legislative houses. This bill would increase that to a three-fifths vote.

To read the full text of SB 9 and SJR 2, visit [Texas Legislature Online](#).

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Senator Hancock represents [Senate District 9](#), which includes portions of Dallas and Tarrant Counties.