



**House  
Legislative  
Analysis  
Section**

House Office Building, 9 South  
Lansing, Michigan 48909  
Phone: 517/373-6466

## UNICAMERAL LEGISLATURE

### House Joint Resolution Q

**Sponsor: Rep. Ruth Johnson**

**Committee: House Oversight and  
Operations**

**Complete to 7-31-01**

## A SUMMARY OF HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION Q AS INTRODUCED 6-19-01

The joint resolution proposes an amendment to the State Constitution of 1963 to provide for a unicameral legislature. Beginning January 1, 2005, the legislative power of the state of Michigan would be vested in a legislature consisting of one chamber. The legislature would consist of 110 members elected for staggered four-year terms. Members would be elected from single member districts apportioned on the basis of population.

The joint resolution states that its provisions would take effect January 1, 2005. The Senate and the House of Representatives would be abolished at midnight on December 31, 2004. The terms of sitting senators or representatives would expire at midnight on December 31, 2004. Legislators would be elected to the unicameral legislature at the 2004 general election, with terms beginning January 1, 2005.

All authority vested by the constitution or laws of the state in the Senate, House of Representatives, or joint session of the Senate and House of Representatives would be vested in a legislature of one chamber. All provisions in the constitution and laws relating to the legislature, the Senate, the House of Representatives, joint sessions of the two houses, and to senators and representatives, would apply to and mean the legislature of one chamber and its members. Likewise, all references to the Clerk of the House of Representatives and the Secretary of the Senate would mean the clerk of the legislature of one chamber. And, all references to the Speaker of the House of Representatives or President Pro Tem of the Senate would mean the majority leader of the legislature. The lieutenant governor would be the president of the legislature, with a vote only in the case of a tie.

The joint resolution would delete language from the constitution referring to the 38-member Senate and the 110-member House of Representatives, the apportionment of legislative districts, and the commission on legislative apportionment (this provision was declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1982). Further, the resolution would delete references to joint committees and to concurrent resolutions of the legislature, and change all references to the two houses to instead refer to "the legislature". Powers specifically vested in the House of Representatives (impeachment of officers) and in the Senate (trial of impeached officers, advice and consent on gubernatorial appointments) would instead be vested in the unicameral legislature.

Under the joint resolution, a person would have to be at least 18 years old to be elected to the legislature. Currently, the constitution requires senators and representatives to be at least 21 years old.

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And, under the joint resolution, no person could be elected to the legislature more than three times (for a total of 12 years). Currently, House members may serve up to three terms (six years), and senators may serve up to two terms (eight years).

The joint resolution specifies that the proposed constitutional amendment would be submitted to the voters at the next general election.

Analyst: D. Martens

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■This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.