

HM 1287

2019

## 1 House Memorial

2 A memorial to the Congress of the United States,  
3 requesting Congress to adopt budgetary and other  
4 measures to reduce income inequality.

5  
6 WHEREAS, every United States resident should have the  
7 opportunity to achieve his or her maximum potential, and

8 WHEREAS, for more than three decades, there has been a huge  
9 transfer of income from the middle class to a small percentage  
10 of the upper class, weakening the economic and social well-being  
11 of many residents, and

12 WHEREAS, according to research published on September 3,  
13 2013, by Emmanuel Saez at the University of California,  
14 Berkeley, in 1976 the top 1 percent of earners took home 9  
15 percent of the total income, but in 2012 the top 1 percent of  
16 earners took home 22.5 percent of the total income, and

17 WHEREAS, Emmanuel Saez's research also concluded that  
18 between 1976 and 2012, the total income taken home by the top 10  
19 percent of earners increased from 33 percent to more than 50  
20 percent, and between 2009 and 2012, a period of economic  
21 recovery, the top 1 percent of earners captured 95 percent of  
22 all income gains, and

23 WHEREAS, according to a November 5, 2014, report by the  
24 Council of Economic Advisers of the Executive Office of the  
25 President, if the percentage of income earned by the bottom 90

HM 1287

2019

26 | percent of earners was the same in 2013 as it was in 1973, the  
27 | median annual household income adjusted for family size would  
28 | have been 18 percent higher, and

29 |       WHEREAS, according to the Federal Reserve's 2016 Survey of  
30 | Consumer Finances, the top 1 percent of households controlled  
31 | 38.6 percent of the total wealth, an increase from 36.3 percent  
32 | in 2013, and the top 10 percent of households controlled 77.2  
33 | percent of the total wealth, leaving the bottom 90 percent of  
34 | households controlling only 22.8 percent of the total wealth,  
35 | and

36 |       WHEREAS, since the 1970s, increases in income inequality  
37 | are widely viewed to be the result of stagnant wage growth,  
38 | technological change, globalization, declines in labor union  
39 | memberships, oversized executive salaries, and reductions in  
40 | employment and retirement benefits, and

41 |       WHEREAS, children born into low-income families are less  
42 | likely to have access to early childhood education, more likely  
43 | to attend poorly funded schools that deliver inferior K-12  
44 | education, and less likely to attend or complete college, and

45 |       WHEREAS, increasing income inequality limits job creation,  
46 | educational attainment, health conditions, and future  
47 | opportunities for young persons, and

48 |       WHEREAS, federal, state, and local governments have  
49 | insufficient tax revenue to adequately fund their essential  
50 | responsibilities, including health care, education, and child

51 and elderly welfare, to ensure the well-being of all residents,  
 52 and

53 WHEREAS, the wide income disparity and the unprecedented  
 54 transfer of wealth pose a significant threat to the United  
 55 States' economy and democracy, contribute to a breakdown of  
 56 residents' trust in the fair functioning of the economy,  
 57 undermine residents' well-being, and threaten the middle class  
 58 with a less secure and prosperous future, NOW, THEREFORE,  
 59

60 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

61  
 62 That the Congress of the United States is requested to:

63 (1) Modernize and reform personal income taxes to close  
 64 tax loopholes, simplify the preparation of tax returns, and make  
 65 the payment of taxes less regressive.

66 (2) Reform corporate income taxes to ensure that all  
 67 corporations pay a minimum tax, eliminate offshore tax havens  
 68 and special interest exemptions, and close tax loopholes.

69 (3) Increase the minimum wage in incremental steps over  
 70 time so that it represents a living wage.

71 (4) Adequately fund essential federal government  
 72 responsibilities, including public safety, the courts, health  
 73 care, and programs that ensure the well-being of children and  
 74 the elderly.

75 (5) Provide substantially increased funding to programs  
76 that support the unemployed and others in need, including, but  
77 are not limited to, unemployment compensation programs, job  
78 training programs, the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families  
79 program, affordable housing programs, and food and nutritional  
80 assistance programs.

81 (6) Provide increased funding for early childhood  
82 education programs, public schools, and vocational and technical  
83 education programs to help secure a more prosperous future for  
84 young persons.

85 (7) Enact strong legislation to contain health care costs,  
86 including prescription drug costs, and ensure that action is  
87 taken to identify, prosecute, and punish those who commit health  
88 care fraud.

89 (8) Provide funding over a multiyear period to repair and  
90 enhance the infrastructure of the United States, including, but  
91 not limited to, public roads, highways, bridges, and buildings.

92 (9) Ensure that federal law is sufficient and federal  
93 agencies are adequately funded to ensure effective regulation of  
94 financial institutions and investment firms and to punish those  
95 who intentionally deceive the public.

96 (10) Appoint a special study commission to examine the  
97 adequacy of consumer protection, including consumer credit,  
98 subprime automobile loans, title loans, residential mortgages,  
99 telemarketing, consumer products, and employment law, and to

HM 1287

2019

100 | ensure that federal laws relating to consumer protection are  
101 | strongly enforced.

102 |       BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of State dispatch  
103 | copies of this memorial to the President of the United States,  
104 | to the President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of  
105 | the United States House of Representatives, and to each member  
106 | of the Florida delegation to the United States Congress.