



# HJR 4203 and SJR 8201, to lower the standard for increasing property taxes and imposing long-term public debt

By LIV FINNE | BLOG | Feb 7, 2020

Sometimes the legislature has trouble letting go of bad ideas. After failing last year, HJR 4203 and SJR 8201 have been reintroduced in the current session. These resolutions failed last year for good reason.

Specifically, HJR 4203 and SJR 8201 would amend the state constitution to reduce the voter-approval standard from a 60 percent requirement to a 50 percent requirement to approve school bond levies for building and remodeling school buildings.

We published a full discussion of these resolutions in this Legislative Memo.

The 60 percent standard represents an important safeguard in the state Constitution that is working as intended. It should not be changed. The provision works whenever school officials present the community with a convincing need that gains enough votes to meet or exceed the standard. At the same time, it protects children and young families from being burdened with higher property taxes and excessive debt payments. It protects retired couples on fixed incomes from being forced out of their homes by crushing property tax increases.

The 60 percent standard for passing school bonds is a successful policy Washington has had for over 70 years. The standard is a reasonable debt policy and taxpayer protection that serves the public interest.