

Lawmakers in 20 states move to reclaim sovereignty

Obama's \$1 trillion deficit-spending 'stimulus plan' seen as last straw

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NEW YORK – As the Obama administration attempts to push through Congress a nearly \$1 trillion deficit spending plan that is weighted heavily toward advancing typically Democratic-supported social welfare programs, a rebellion against the growing dominance of federal control is beginning to spread at the state level.

So far, eight states have introduced resolutions declaring state sovereignty under the Ninth and Tenth Amendment to the Constitution, including [Arizona](#), [Hawaii](#), [Montana](#), [Michigan](#), [Missouri](#), [New Hampshire](#), [Oklahoma](#) and [Washington](#).

Analysts expect that in addition, another 20 states [may see similar measures introduced this year](#), including Alaska, Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Nevada, Maine and Pennsylvania.



Oklahoma Republican state Sen. Randy Brogdon

"What we are trying to do is to get the U.S. Congress out of the state's business," [Oklahoma Republican state Sen. Randy Brogdon](#) told WND.

"Congress is completely out of line spending trillions of dollars over the last 10 years putting the nation into a [debt crisis](#)

like we've never seen before," Brogdon said, arguing that the Obama stimulus plan is the last straw taxing state patience in the brewing sovereignty dispute.

"This particular 111th Congress is the biggest bunch of over-reachers and underachievers we've ever had in Congress," he said.

"A sixth-grader should realize you can't borrow money to pay off your debt, and that is the Obama administration's answer for a stimulus package," he added.

The Ninth Amendment reads, "The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people."

The Tenth Amendment specifically provides, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

Brogdon, the lead sponsor of the Oklahoma state senate version of the sovereignty bill, has been a strong opponent of extending the plan to build a four-football-fields-wide Trans-Texas Corridor parallel to Interstate-35 to Oklahoma, as [WND reported](#).

Rollback federal authority

The various sovereignty measures moving through state legislatures are designed to reassert state authority through a rollback of federal authority under the powers enumerated in the Constitution, with the states assuming the governance of the non-enumerated powers, as required by the Tenth Amendment.

The state sovereignty measures, aimed largely at the perceived fiscal irresponsibility of Congress in the administrations of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, have gained momentum with the \$1 trillion deficit-spending economic stimulus package the Obama administration is currently pushing through Congress.

Particularly disturbing to many state legislators are the increasing number of "unfunded mandates" that have proliferated in social welfare programs, such as Medicare and Medicaid, in which bills passed by Congress dictate policy to the states without providing funding.

In addition, the various state resolutions include discussion of a wide range of policy areas, including the regulation of firearms sales (Montana) and the demand to issue drivers licenses with [technology](#) to embed personal information under the Western Hemisphere [Travel](#) Initiative and the Real ID Act (Michigan).

Hawaii's measure calls for a new state constitutional [convention](#) to return self-governance, a complaint that traces back to the days it was a U.S. territory, prior to achieving statehood in 1959.

"We are trying to send a message to the federal government that the states are trying to reclaim their sovereignty," [Republican Rep. Matt Shea](#), the lead sponsor of Washington's sovereignty resolution told WND.

"State sovereignty has been eroded in so many areas, it's hard to know where to start," he said. "There are a ton of federal mandates imposed on states, for instance, on education spending and welfare spending."

Shea said the Obama administration's economic stimulus package moving through Congress is a "perfect example."

"In the state of Washington, we have increased state spending 33 percent in the last three years and hired 6,000 new state employees, often using federal mandates as an excuse to grow state government," he said. "We need to return government back down to the people, to keep government as close to the local people as possible."

Shea is a private attorney who serves with the Alliance Defense Fund, a nationwide network of about 1,000 attorneys who work pro-bono. As a [counter](#) to the ACLU, the alliance seeks to protect and defend religious liberty, the sanctity of life and traditional family values.

Republican state Rep. Judy Burges, the primary sponsor of the sovereignty resolution in the Arizona House, told WND the federal government "has been trouncing on our constitutional rights."

"The real turning point for me was the Real ID act, which involved both a violation of the Fourth Amendments rights against the illegal searches and seizures and the Tenth Amendment," she said.

Burges told WND she is concerned that the overreaching of federal powers could lead to new legislation aimed at confiscating weapons from citizens or encoding ammunition.

"The Real ID Act was so broadly written that we are afraid that it involves the potential for "mission-creep," that could easily involve confiscation of firearms and violations of the Second Amendment," she said.

Burges said she has been surprised at the number of [e-mails](#) she has received in support of the sovereignty measure.

"We are a sovereign state in Arizona, not a branch of the federal government, and we need to be treated as such, she insisted.