



THUNDERING WORD

**2026 MARSHALL UNIVERSITY JOHN MARSHALL  
SPEECH AND DEBATE TOURNAMENT**

**CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE DOCKET**

**PRIMARY\*:**

1. A Bill to Eliminate Pharmaceutical Advertisements
2. A Resolution to Amend the Constitution to Recognize the Right to Live in a Clean, Healthy, and Safe Environment
3. A Bill to Establish Safe Injection Sites Nationwide
4. A Bill to Protect Children by Banning Child Marriage
5. A Bill to Regulate the Water Usage of AI Systems
6. A Bill to Protect Marine Ecosystems to Preserve Biodiversity
7. A Bill to Implement a Wealth Tax
8. A Bill to Regulate Puppy Mills

**SECONDARY:**

9. A Bill to Establish Free Healthcare to Ensure Free and Fair Access to Medical Services for all United States Residents

\* The order of legislation on the docket shall not be changed, except (1) to take up a piece of legislation at the beginning of the second session if the legislation's author is presiding officer during the first session; or (2) to take up a piece of legislation at the beginning of the first session if it's among the first four bills and the legislation's author will be serving as presiding officer during the second session.

\*\* The maximum time for debate on any piece of legislation is 45 minutes. At the end of this period, the legislation should be voted on, and the legislative body move then to the next bill.

## **A Bill to Eliminate Pharmaceutical Advertisements**

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS ASSEMBLED HERE THAT:

**Section 1:** The United States shall hereby prohibit all direct-to-consumer prescription drug advertisements on television, radio, print, digital platforms, and social media.

**Section 2:** The term “direct-to-consumer advertising” means any promotional communication targeting consumers, including through television, radio, print media, digital platforms, and social media, for marketing purposes.

**Section 3:** Any radio or television station acting in conflict with this legislation will be fined \$5,000 per second that the advertisement is run. Any other media company acting in violation to this legislation will be fined \$100,000 per advertisement.

**Section 4:** This legislation shall be enforced by the Federal Communications Commission and the Federal Trade Commission.

**Section 5:** This legislation shall take effect on January 1, 2027.

**Section 6:** All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

# A Resolution to Amend the Constitution to Recognize the Right to Live in a Clean, Healthy, and Safe Environment

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**RESOLVED**, By two-thirds of the Congress here assembled, that the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several states within seven years from the date of its submission by the Congress:

## **ARTICLE --**

**SECTION 1:** The right of citizens of the United States to live in a clean, healthy, and safe environment shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state. The United States shall take reasonable measures to ensure this right and may regulate or prosecute private actors who violate it.

**SECTION 2:** A clean, healthy, and safe environment shall be defined as a surrounding free from hazards where individuals have access to clean air, safe water, adequate sanitation, and non-toxic spaces to live, work, and play.

**SECTION 3:** A private actor shall be defined as individuals, groups, businesses, or organizations that are not part of the formal government but significantly influence society, policy, or global affairs, acting independently or in partnership with public entities to drive change or provide services.

**SECTION 4:** The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Dani Scantlin  
Ripley High School*

**PRIMARY**

**A Bill to Establish Safe Injection Sites Nationwide**

BE IT ENACTED BY THE STUDENT CONGRESS THAT:

1. **SECTION 1.** This legislation aims to combat drug overdoses and
2. build a path toward a safer United States via establishing 50,000
3. safe injection sites through all 50 states.
4. **SECTION 2.** Safe injection sites will be defined as mobile sites
5. equipped to give clean needles and provide information on
6. counseling and rehabilitation services.
7. **SECTION 3.** The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
8. will enforce this bill with a budget of 3 billion dollars taken from
9. the federal military budget. The HHS will work with local and state
10. governments to establish these sites.
11. **SECTION 4.** This bill will go into effect October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2028. All
12. laws in conflict are hereby declared null and void.

*Introduced for congressional debate by Jacob Miller, Parkersburg High School.*

# A Bill to Protect Children by Banning Child Marriage

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

**SECTION 1.** Marriages between or involving parties under the legal age of consent, 18, are not permitted.

**SECTION 2.** “Marriage” is defined as the legal process that involves binding two parties together via a marriage certificate.

**SECTION 3.** The Marriage Bureau is prohibited from administering a marriage certificate involving parties below the age of consent, 18.

- A. **Parental Consent cannot be used to allow marriage between any minor parties.**
- B. **Religious, non-legally binding marriages are fully permitted, but cannot become legally binding until both parties turn 18 and file for a marriage certificate.**

**SECTION 4.** This legislation will take effect on [insert date here, formatted as “FY 2024” or “July 1, 2024” but not “July 1st”]. All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

*Introduced for Congressional Debate by Harper Armentrout.*

# A Bill to Regulate the Water Usage of AI Systems

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** Companies operating and developing artificial intelligence (AI) systems  
3 shall be required to report annual water consumption, meet efficiency  
4 benchmarks for infrastructure, and implement measures to reduce  
5 excessive water usage during model deployment.

6 **SECTION 2.** “Artificial intelligence systems” shall be defined as computational models  
7 designed to perform tasks that would typically require human  
8 intelligence. It shall include but not be limited to image recognition,  
9 natural language processing, and decision-making algorithms. “Water  
10 usage” shall refer to all water used for cooling purposes, cleaning, and  
11 any process that is directly related to AI model training, storage, or  
12 operation.

13 “Efficiency benchmarks” shall be defined as the maximum allowable  
14 water consumption recommended by the Department of Energy.

15 **SECTION 3.** The Environmental Protection Agency shall oversee enforcement of  
16 water reporting and efficiency compliance.

17 A. The Department of Energy shall establish the efficiency benchmarks.

18 B. Penalties for noncompliance shall include civil fines.

19 **SECTION 4.** This legislation will take effect immediately upon passage. All laws in  
20 conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

*Introduced for Congressional Debate by Riley Bouvy, Spring Valley High School.*

1 A Bill to Protect Marine Ecosystems to Preserve Biodiversity  
2 and Coastal Resources

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4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

5 **SECTION 1.**

6 The United States shall expand marine conservation efforts by designating additional  
7 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in vulnerable coastal and ocean ecosystems and limiting  
8 harmful human activities in those areas.

9

10 **SECTION 2.**

11 For the purposes of this legislation:

12 A. "Marine Protected Area (MPA)" refers to a region of ocean where human activity is  
13 regulated to conserve natural resources.

14 B. "Harmful human activities" include overfishing, dumping of pollutants, and  
15 destructive seabed mining.

16 C. "Vulnerable ecosystems" include coral reefs, breeding grounds, and habitats of  
17 endangered marine species.

18

19 **SECTION 3.**

20 The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Environmental  
21 Protection Agency (EPA) shall oversee enforcement.

22 A. NOAA shall monitor protected areas and publish annual conservation reports.

23 B. Violations shall result in fines and possible suspension of commercial fishing  
24 licenses.

25 C. Grants shall be provided to support sustainable fishing practices and conservation  
26 education.

27 D. Federal funding shall be increased by \$500 million annually to support NOAA and  
28 EPA marine conservation programs, enforcement efforts, and public education  
29 initiatives.

30

31 **SECTION 4.**

32 This legislation will take effect on FY 2028. All laws in conflict with this legislation are  
33 hereby declared null and void.

Introduced for Congressional Debate by Jaelie Shank

# A Bill to Implement a Wealth Tax

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

1           **SECTION 1.** The United States will hereby implement a 2% wealth tax on  
2           any individual or household with a net worth above \$90 million.

3           **SECTION 2.** A wealth tax shall be defined as a direct tax on an  
4           individual's net worth, or the total market value of their assets minus their  
5           liabilities.

6           An individual shall be defined as any one person or party.

7           An asset is anything owned by an individual or business that has or could  
8           have economic value, including but not limited to stocks, real estate,  
9           or money.

10          Liabilities are anything an individual or individuals' business owes against  
11          their assets.

12          **SECTION 3.** The implementation of this legislation shall be overseen by  
13          the Department of Treasury and the IRS.

14          **SECTION 4.** This legislation will take effect in FY 2027. All laws in  
            conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Dani Scantlin*

*Ripley High School*

**A Bill to Regulate Puppy Mills**

1 *Be it enacted by the congress here assembled that*

2 **Section 1** The breeding of dogs shall be subjected to more stringent regulations.

3 **Section 2** *Puppy mill* shall be defined as a business based on the breeding and sale of

4 dogs. This definition will include home-based breeders as well as any other

5 organization profiting off the breeding of dogs. The criteria for a puppy mill to

6 be deemed illegal will be the availability of nourishment, the space in which

7 they are confined, and the overall health.

8 **Section 3** The government administration in charge of enforcing this bill is the Animal  
and

9 Plant Health Inspection Service. APHIS will be in charge of all factors  
contributing

10 to quality of life. APHIS will be granted warrants to inspect puppy mills if cruel  
11 conditions are reported.

12 The consequences for violations will be fines depending on the severity of the  
13 infraction, with a mandatory recertification for the license to breed and sell  
dogs.

14 Failure to do so, or second offenses, will have a permanent suspension of  
their

15 breeding license and possibly criminal prosecution.

24 **Section 4** This legislation will take effect within in one year of passing. All laws in

25 conflict with this bill are hereby declared null and void.

Sincerely submitted by *Senator William Bashaw*

# A Bill to Establish Free Healthcare to Ensure Free and Fair Access to Medical Services for all United States Residents

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

1                   **SECTION 1.**

2                   The United States shall establish a system of free, universal healthcare to  
3                   guarantee access to essential medical services, including primary care,  
4                   emergency services, hospitalization, and prescription drugs, for all  
5                   residents regardless of income, employment, or immigration status.

6                   **SECTION 2.**

7                   A. "Free" shall be defined as no out-of-pocket costs at the point of service  
8                   for patients, including the elimination of copayments, deductibles, and  
9                   premiums.

10                  B. "Essential medical services" shall include preventative care, diagnostic  
11                  services, emergency and urgent care, emergency hospital stays,  
12                  prescription medications, and maternal and mental health services, as  
13                  determined by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

14                  **SECTION 3.**

15                  A. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) shall oversee  
16                  implementation of this program.

17                  B. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) shall administer  
18                  payments to hospitals, clinics, and other providers.

19                  C. Funding will be allocated through a combination of existing  
20                  Medicare/Medicaid funds, a restructured federal healthcare budget, and,  
21                  most notably, an allocation of some military funds that are, currently,  
22                  effectively wasted.

23                  **SECTION 4.**

24                  A. **Healthcare Costs Are Rising Unsustainably.** National health  
25                  expenditures are projected to grow by 7.1% in 2025, reaching nearly \$5.6  
26                  trillion (Keehan et al.; KFF/Health System Tracker). In 2023, spending was  
27                  already \$4.9 trillion, or 17.6% of GDP (CMS). Employers expect costs to  
28                  grow by nearly 8% in 2025, the highest increase in over a decade (Business

29 Group on Health). Despite these expenditures, millions of Americans  
30 remain uninsured or underinsured, and prescription drug shortages  
31 reached record highs in 2024.

32 **B. Universal Healthcare would be cheaper than the current system.**

33 Recent analyses show that a nationalized, single-payer system would  
34 actually reduce overall costs. Currently, the U.S. spends between \$4 and \$5  
35 trillion annually on healthcare, including public spending, private  
36 insurance, employer contributions, and out-of-pocket costs. By contrast,  
37 studies project that universal healthcare could operate at approximately  
38 \$3.1 trillion per year because of savings from bulk drug purchasing, lower  
39 administrative overhead, reduced emergency room reliance, preventative  
40 care investment, and, most importantly, eliminate the need for health  
41 insurance. Current insurance agents can be subsidized to move into car,  
42 home, and life insurance fields, alongside others. According to studies, the  
43 overall cost of subsidizing these insurance agents for a year is less than \$2  
44 billion. This means that not only would every American be guaranteed  
45 healthcare coverage, but the nation would also spend hundreds of billions  
46 less each year than under the fragmented, insurance-driven status quo  
47 (Turner et al.; Commonwealth Fund) (“High U.S. Health Care Spending”).

48 **B. Coverage Remains Inadequate.** The U.S. continues to lag behind peer  
49 nations with universal healthcare, which achieve stronger outcomes, such  
50 as higher life expectancy and lower infant mortality, while spending  
51 significantly less per capita.

52 **C. Government Waste Can Be Redirected.** The Government Accountability  
53 Office identified 38 federal program areas vulnerable to waste and  
54 inefficiency, with reforms in recent years yielding about \$84 billion in  
55 savings. In addition, the federal government made \$162 billion in improper  
56 payments in 2024 (GAO, *High-Risk List 2025*).

57 **D. Defense Spending Inefficiencies Are Large.** The Department of Defense  
58 requested a base budget of approximately \$893 billion in FY 2025 (CAGW).  
59 GAO reports recurring issues with cost overruns, contractor markups, and  
60 fraud, with the DoD itself confirming \$10.8 billion in fraud from FY 2017–  
61 2024 (GAO, *Financial Management 2025*). Cutting even 5–10% of

62 nonessential procurement and administrative waste could redirect \$40–85  
63 billion annually to healthcare.

64 **E. Long-Term Savings Through Reform.** When combined with healthcare-  
65 specific reforms like bulk drug price negotiation, preventative care  
expansion, and streamlined administration, these redirected funds ensure  
that universal healthcare will be fiscally sustainable, equitable, and cost-  
effective.

**SECTION 5.**

This legislation will take effect on January 1, 2027. All laws in conflict with  
this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

*Introduced for Congressional Debate by Mikhail Shkirov.*