

# House Concurrent Resolution No. 52

## 94TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2738L.021

1           **Whereas**, a program that is important to the citizens of the United States is in  
2 jeopardy as the result of decisions that have been proposed in the United States Congress; and

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4           **Whereas**, twenty-one of our states that have an individual income tax have  
5 implemented an innovative solution to meet the needs of the low-income, disadvantaged,  
6 underserved, and working poor taxpayers, many of whom are eligible for the Earned Income Tax  
7 Credit; and

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9           **Whereas**, this innovative solution, called the State Free File Alliance, has been  
10 developed over the last decade where public need, private corporate citizenship and community-  
11 based organizations have worked together in an era of fiscal limits and new challenges; and

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13           **Whereas**, the State Free File online tax program is based on an agreement reached  
14 between the Internal Revenue Service and the American software industry, whereby working  
15 poor and other lower-income and underserved families and individuals are able to obtain free  
16 electronic tax preparation and electronic filing for their federal and state tax returns; and

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18           **Whereas**, the program saves state budgets the very high cost of creating an  
19 alternate online government tax preparation and filing service. Twenty-one states have each  
20 decided to create a Free File Alliance public-private partnership solution, creating Free File  
21 programs in their states. This has saved state governments many hundreds of millions of dollars  
22 in expenditures, while providing free services to those who need them; and

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24           **Whereas**, the Internal Revenue Service negotiated the terms of the national Free  
25 File Agreement with the software providers, which is the common basis for all the Free File  
26 programs in the twenty-one Free File states; and

27       **Whereas**, the same Internal Revenue Service program has since developed some  
28 significant management and operational reforms to improve the Free File programs, as well as  
29 the federal program, and these reforms need to be supported and rigorously implemented,  
30 ensuring that Free File is free of sales, marketing, or advertising of any products and services  
31 other than a tax return and affirming that no products other than tax returns should be offered or  
32 provided through this program:

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34       **Now, therefore, be it resolved** that the members of the House of  
35 Representatives of the Ninety-fourth General Assembly, First Regular Session, the Senate  
36 concurring therein, hereby find that the public and the states rely upon the Internal Revenue  
37 Service vetting these companies before holding them out for use through the IRS web site; and

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39       **Be it further resolved** that the Missouri General Assembly recommends that  
40 the new policy of prohibiting sales, marketing, or advertising, or offering products other than tax  
41 returns should be encouraged and enforced, consistent with the Office of Management and  
42 Budget and the General Services Administration rules governing all federal web sites; and

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44       **Be it further resolved** that tax return information should not be traded,  
45 bartered, rented, shared, or sold, and that the privacy of people's tax return information is strictly  
46 protected, with no other use of that data either permitted or possible; and

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48       **Be it further resolved** that companies participating in Free File should be  
49 required to meet the same time-tested federal standards for corporate responsibility and  
50 commerciality that are a basic requirement for the government's own purchase of commercial  
51 services; and

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53       **Be it further resolved** that while participating companies should continue  
54 to provide free federal tax returns under the national Free File program, the Internal Revenue  
55 Service should be directed to encourage those companies to also voluntarily provide free state  
56 returns for eligible taxpayers in those states that also have State Free File Alliance; and

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58       **Be it further resolved** that the Missouri General Assembly urges the United  
59 States Congress and the President of the United States to take immediate action on this  
60 resolution; and

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62       **Be it further resolved** that the Chief Clerk of the Missouri House of  
63 Representatives be instructed to prepare properly inscribed copies of this resolution for the  
64 President of the United States, the President of the U.S. Senate, the Speaker of the U.S. House  
65 of Representatives, the Majority Leaders and Minority Leaders of the U.S. House of  
66 Representatives and U.S. Senate, each member of the United States Congress, the U.S. Secretary  
67 of the Treasury, the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service, the Chair and members of  
68 the U.S. Senate Finance Committee, the Chair and members of the U.S. House Committee on  
69 Appropriations Subcommittee on the Treasury, the Chair and members of the U.S. Senate  
70 Appropriations Subcommittee on the Treasury, and Governors of the twenty-one Free File states;  
71 and