

National Taxpayers Union Endorses TABOR. Coalition of Taxpayers Groups Says Constitutional Taxpayer Protection is the Right Remedy for Wisconsin's Woes.

Years of overspending and tax hikes in Wisconsin call for a state Constitutional remedy, according to a joint statement from 11 organizations that called on state lawmakers to enact Assembly Joint Resolution 55, a "Taxpayer's Bill of Rights" (TABOR) sponsored by Rep. Frank Lasee (R-2). The coalition was organized by the non-partisan National Taxpayers Union (NTU).

According to the signatories of the open letter to state leaders, TABOR is the prescription for good economic health in the face of state budget ills. "Wisconsin's Legislature should consider the positive example Colorado's TABOR offers," the statement said. "Colorado has led the nation in personal income growth and job growth, resulting in increased government revenues even in the absence of tax increases."

The bill would limit annual state spending increases to inflation plus population growth, and require voter approval of new taxes via referendum. These provisions are generally modeled after Colorado's successful TABOR, with several additional provisions (such as growth limits on school taxes that reflect enrollment).

Citing expenditures that far outpace inflation including spending increases on corrections at over nine times faster), the letter notes that Wisconsin taxpayers could have saved as much as \$21.5 billion, or more than \$10,200 per household, if AJR 55 had been in effect between 1990 and 2001.

In addition to NTU, the signatories included diverse groups such as the Milwaukee Public Affairs Council, United Wisconsin, American Family Business Institute, and the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons, Wisconsin chapter. All participants, whether headquartered in the state or not, had a substantial number of members in Wisconsin (NTU, for example, has over 7,500 members in the Badger State).

"TABOR would at last get government spending under control and give voters the final say over how much money government takes from them," the signatories noted. "This is not just an economic necessity; it is a common courtesy to taxpayers."

NTU was founded in 1969 to work for lower taxes, the elimination of wasteful spending, and more accountable government at all levels. Note: The full text of the coalition letter, along with more information on tax limitation efforts across the country, is available at www.ntu.org.

"For every action, there is an equal and opposite government program."

. . . Bob Wells

"I hope we never live to see the day when things are as bad as some of our newspapers make it." . . . Will Rogers

Brown County Needs a Higher Voter Turnout. Project Vote. A Local Group, is determined to turn that around.

The April 6th election is a perfect example of the importance of everyone's vote. Four of the Brown County races were determined by ballot recounts, yet only 15.6% of the eligible voters in Brown County bothered to vote. One-third (35%) of all of your tax dollars are decided by the local officials that we elect. Not being able to schedule voting into our busy lives is a very poor excuse, especially when an absentee ballot can now be completed without a reason, simply by going to your city or county office.

Project VOTE (Voice of the Electorate) is a non-partisan, volunteer based organization dedicated to increasing voter turnout in Brown County. As an issue-neutral, non-partisan organization Project VOTE does not endorse political parties, candidates or issues. Project VOTE has done a number of educational initiatives to provide information for the Brown County voters so that we not only increase voter turnout, but that it's also an educated vote. The ultimate objective is for Brown County to have the highest voter turnout in the state.

Project VOTE has initiated a number of activities to try and stimulate voter turnout. We would like to think the turnout would have been even worse without these efforts. Some of the efforts to date have been as follows:

- **TV PSA's (Public Service Announcements)**
- **Billboards**
- **Yard Signs**
- **Letters to the Editor**
- **Special Events, such as Candidate Forums (5)**
- **Establish a traveling trophy that resides with the local community with the best voter turnout. The Village of Hobart won the April 6th contest with a 33% turnout.**
- **Created a web site showing:**
 - Voting in Brown county (where and how),
 - Current elected positions
 - Past election information
 - Hot topics, etc.

For more information go to the Project VOTE web site: <http://www.project-vote.org>, or if you have any ideas on how to improve voter turnout, please contact me. Your support is greatly appreciated. *Thank you.*

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