



March 12, 2009

Dear Legislator,

I am writing to strongly urge that you oppose Governor Jan Brewer's plans for a \$1 billion in annual tax increases on Arizona taxpayers.

One of the few things economists of all political stripes can agree on is that the last thing you want to do in a recession is raise taxes. Raising taxes in the current economic downturn will hurt Arizona families and encourage businesses to relocate across state lines, taking jobs with them.

According to the Center for Fiscal Accountability, Arizona taxpayers already spend 194 days – more than half the year – working just to pay for the cost of government. Furthermore, many Arizonans are already wondering how to cope if President Barack Obama's budget – which contains over \$1 trillion in tax hikes over the next 10 years – is passed into law. In this environment, Gov. Brewer's proposed tax hikes will serve as the proverbial straw that breaks the state's economic back. Irrespective of the form in which it passes, it will have an adverse and deleterious impact on the Arizona economy and taxpayers.

I urge you not to be fooled by claims this tax hike would be "temporary". History has proven that 'temporary' tax hikes are about as prevalent in nature as unicorns. Point of fact, Arizonans that have land line phones are still paying the "temporary" tax hike put in place to fund the Spanish-American War of 1898.

Do not forget – Arizona does not have a budget shortfall – it has an overspending problem. According to the Goldwater Institute, the state's general fund spending has grown at double the rate of population and inflation over the last five years – 66 percent compared to 33 percent. For the Arizona economy to recover and prosper, the size of government *must* be reigned in.

Families all over the Grand Canyon State are cutting back, making tough decisions, and prioritizing in order to live within reduced means. The state must do likewise.

Some elected officials view taxpayers, rather than tenured bureaucrats, union bosses and other spending interests, as their constituents. Americans for Tax Reform commends those elected officials who work for Arizona taxpayers rather than against them. Feel free to call on me or ATR's state government affairs manager, Patrick Gleason (pgleason@atr.org) with any questions or concerns.

Onward,

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