



June 19, 2009

Dear Speaker Adams,

I am writing to thank you for remaining steadfast in defense of Arizona taxpayers. As we approach the budget deadline, Governor Jan Brewer is intensifying her push for a \$3 billion sales tax increase. Your continued opposition to the Brewer-Coughlin tax hike is all that stands in the way of a massive tax increase on Arizona families and employers in the middle of a recession.

Any “compromise” that would permit the Brewer-Coughlin tax hike, whether passed directly or referred to the ballot, would **not** be an acceptable compromise for taxpayers. Additionally, **referral of a tax increase to the ballot represents a violation of the Taxpayer Protection Pledge**, a promise that you have made to your constituents to “oppose any and all efforts to raise taxes.” A vote to refer the Brewer-Coughlin tax hike to the ballot would certainly count as failure to oppose an effort to raise taxes, even if it is ultimately subject to voter approval.

It's unfortunate that Gov. Brewer has decided to not use the current fiscal crisis as impetus for reforming Arizona's overspending problem. Rather, she has brought forth a proposal that will increase the cost of living at a time when Arizona families are cutting back, making tough decisions, and prioritizing in order to live within reduced means. The Governor, however, does not believe the state should do likewise.

While this is an Arizona issue, the budget standoff has rightfully captured national attention. Policymakers, pundits, and taxpayers from coast to coast are watching to see what happens in the Grand Canyon State. If Arizona's deficit can be closed without raiding taxpayer wallets, it will serve as a positive teaching moment for lawmakers around the country. Should Brewer and Coughlin get their prized tax hike on the ballot, it will send a message to tax and spenders everywhere that it is still business as usual.

Arizona does not have a budget shortfall – it has an overspending problem. As the Goldwater Institute has pointed out, general fund spending has grown unsustainably at double the rate of population and inflation over the last five years – 66 percent compared to 33 percent. The only way to truly recover is to rein in the size of government. The Brewer-Coughlin tax hike just kicks the can down the road and is an attempt to circumvent necessary reforms.

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. Americans for Tax Reform believes that this is already far too much. By preventing the Brewer-Coughlin tax hike from going through, you will ensure that Arizona's Cost of Government Day does not come later in the year.

Americans for Tax Reform commends those elected officials, such as yourself, who work for Arizona taxpayers rather than against them. As we approach the budget deadline it is imperative that you continue to stand strong in defense of Grand Canyon State taxpayers. Feel free to call on me or ATR's state affairs manager, Patrick Gleason ([pgleason@atr.org](mailto:pgleason@atr.org)) with any questions or concerns.

Onward,

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