



CITIZENS
for
Limited Taxation
The Commonwealth Activist Network

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Dear Massachusetts Taxpayer;

We have a mutual friend who thinks you might like to be included in our citizen/taxpayer network. In this extraordinary, even bizarre political economic year, nobody should be alone and unrepresented!

I moved to Massachusetts in 1971, after living in states with a much lower tax burden and nothing called an auto excise tax. The political culture here made no sense to me. I felt like a stranger in a strange land until I discovered Citizens for Limited Taxation and joined it in 1978, after it defeated a proposed graduated income tax.

By 1980, I was its executive director, and that year we put Proposition 2½ on the ballot, where voters embraced its property tax limit and -- a 66% cut in that auto excise! Prop 2½ is almost thirty years old now. Many of us who created it are now senior citizens ourselves, appreciating it more than ever – though younger taxpayers also need some control over their property taxes in this economic climate.

Over the years, for many CLT members, the question was: fight or flee?

Those who stayed to fight defeated the graduated income tax again, helped the so-called “unearned income tax” drop from 12% to the “earned” income tax rate, which went from 5% to 6.25% then back down to 5.3 percent. (We passed a ballot question for return to the 5% rate, but in 2002 the Legislature “froze” it “temporarily” at 5.3%.)

We helped repeal a sales tax on services, and helped overturn a retroactive capital gains tax. After successfully defeating a sales tax on real estate, we insisted that the so-called “community preservation act” can increase property taxes *only* if local voters approve, so taxpayers have a fighting chance to defeat it. We created a Proposition 2½ override manual to help our members fight scheduled overrides. And we have so far protected Prop 2½ from almost annual attempts to undermine it.

Chip Faulkner’s first assignment with CLT was to fight the so-called Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation’s plan to expand the sales tax and we are still opposing MTF’s various tax hike proposals. Chipster enjoys speaking engagements and hosting monthly meetings of the center-right coalition – other state groups that fight back.

Chip Ford fled for awhile to Florida, then returned and began the fight for freedom issues: He presently keeps taxpayers informed and connected through the CLT website (www.cltg.org) and regular members’ e-mail updates. I enjoy writing a weekly syndicated column for several daily newspapers. We three are still enjoying our taxpayer activist jobs, *fighting* rather than *fleeing*. Like those who have supported CLT – some for decades – we seem to be the “fighting” type by nature.

Every Tax is a Pay Cut . . . A Tax Cut is a Pay Raise

But some of our friends are understandably choosing the flight option (though it's harder this year to find someplace to hide; the country is getting weird too!)

Something is very wrong here, worse than ever before. There has been a pro-government culture in Massachusetts for decades, with public employee benefits that private sector employees pay for and can only dream about. Still, our total per capita tax burden and public spending are among the highest in the country.

Now, as the unfunded public pension and health care liabilities grow, initiative petitions passed by the voters have been ignored, repealed, or permanently "frozen." Voters inscrutably elected a new governor who would *not* take the "no new taxes" pledge; he is *already* trying to increase the tax burden with local option taxes and new sales and gas taxes, and has, predictably, abandoned his campaign pledge to reduce the property tax burden.

Without CLT, Massachusetts taxpayers are up the state creek without a citizens' paddle.

"Together we can" still swim against the tide. *Someone* must defend Proposition 2½. *Someone* must argue for return to the historic 5% income tax rate. When, inevitably, Governor Patrick's support base instead moves to hike the income tax rate to over 6 percent, *someone* must lead the resistance. *Who else can or will?*

If you want to flee, we don't blame you. But if you plan to stay, then join us for the fight. Help us take advantage of the new awareness of the need to reform the public employee benefit system. Stop our politicians from rolling the state into greater fiscal crisis. Give yourself a voice on Beacon Hill.

As you have seen, CLT has already saved you a *great deal* of money. Please join us now, plant your feet firmly on the Bay State's granite once trod by colonial revolutionaries, and take up your virtual arms. We can promise you it will be an interesting battle – *and as long as we are around, that you will not be alone.*

Barbara Anderson

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P.S. We also keep CLT members connected with the national taxpayer issues in this extraordinary year. I am on the National Taxpayers Unions Board of Directors, and Chip Faulkner is the Massachusetts coordinator for Americans for Tax Reform.

I like to quote Greek author Nikos Kazantzakis. "And I strive to discover how to signal my companions . . . to say in time a simple word, a password, like conspirators: Let us unite, let us hold each other tightly . . ." The password is CLT. Unite with us.

I'll help CLT keep fighting for me!

Enclosed is my membership contribution of:

OTHER _____ \$1000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$30

Please Print Clearly

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ APT #: _____

CITY/TOWN: _____ ZIP: _____ - _____

PHONE: () _____ - _____

E-MAIL?: _____

Please make your check payable to CLT, or to CERF

– SEE BELOW FOR MORE INFORMATION –

I'm not yet on your computer e-mail list but would like to receive your regular e-mail updates on my computer! My e-mail address is:

(PLEASE PRINT VERY CLEARLY)

You can e-mail CLT at: staff@cltg.org

Visit CLT's website at: www.cltg.org

CLT can accept all contributions, including corporate, but they are not tax deductible. Contributions to CERF (Citizens Economic Research Foundation), CLT's non-profit educational organization, are tax deductible.

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