

Testimony before the Special Council on Tax Reform and Fairness For Georgians
Frank Keller
Wednesday, September 1, 2010
Valdosta, Georgia

Just One I would like you, as a council or as individuals, to justify Just one exemption. The exemption you choose to justify can apply to sales or property (real or personal). When I understand your one justification for an exemption, I believe I can apply that justification to all exemptions. ----- My contention is that all sales tax exemptions are simply discrimination. My customers at our cafe pay 7 sales tax on every purchase. My business is just as legal and my customers just as sacred to me as the customers who patronize my neighbors business. However, at least 90 of the sales at his tractor dealership are totally exempt from any sales tax. Exemptions that apply to the taxing of real property simply change the tax from one that was conceived to be equitable to a tax that is extremely progressive. My tax bill is based on value, i.e. 40 of value multiplied by the applicable mil rate is the amount of my yearly property tax liability. This is the definition of ad valorem, since all real property is 40 of value multiplied by the mil rate, except the owner of property who benefits from an exemption. Again My business is just as legal, just as sacred as my other neighbors farm business. My business is an asset to our community just as I hope my neighbors farm is. However, his tax bill is the applicable mil rate multiplied by less than 5 of value. This is not--ad valorem. All other exemptions that apply to the taxing of property serve the same purpose--change the taxing of property to an extremely progressive tax. -----
----- Your council can lean heavily toward the state sales tax or the state income tax. But the tax that affects us most down here in the trenches is the real property tax which has been bastardized so much over the years, by the legislature, that it is now more dreaded and more progressive than the Federal Income Tax. -----
----- Again, please Justify one exemption. Frank Keller
Greenville 706 672 4072 Cell-706 977 9521