

"The People's Tax Dollars"
Testimony by Jeff Martin, Citizen Before the Georgia Tax Reform Council
Atlanta Meeting : 8/26/2010

First, we applaud and thank all of you for serving on this council at this critical moment in Georgia's history and the over-taxation of its citizens. I also want to thank Mayor Kasim Reed for his leadership in recommending a reduction in the size and scope of government, which includes downsizing of the number of state employees by a minimum of 15% in the next 36 months.

Taxation is breaking the American dream and spirit for every citizen and entrepreneur in Georgia. As more taxes are implemented on the public and in every business, net income is decreasing. Georgians are finding alternative avenues to generate income by bartering their goods and services. Therefore, we have a sluggish and struggling economy. Until we have a bipartisan agreement where business has a clear vision of a tax system in place, they are unable to forecast with accuracy, projected growth due to instability in the current tax code. Stagnation in hiring will continue and revenue will continue to decrease. The fundamental result is that the public "will control" the amount of revenue taken in by the state. The council has a fiduciary duty and responsibility of their authority to study and recommend transitioning our tax code into a favorable and fair system. Collection and proper distribution of revenue into state agencies funded within budget must be the objective. Personal responsibility drives prosperity.

Empower the free market to accelerate job growth thru limited government. **The state must be accountable and responsible for their money management, as well as, "Elected Public Servants"**. Sustainable growth for Georgia and income must have an efficient management system of tracking expenditures utilizing technology driven smart business solutions.

Public officials must execute leadership and convey to the citizens of our state that they are: **Fiscally Responsible with "our tax dollars"**.

"We The People of Georgia" respectfully request that you make the following recommendations to the Georgia General Assembly:

1. Strip the authority of bureaucrats and agencies from increasing user fees. (HB 1055, HB 1284)
2. Recommend the legislature pass the sunset legislation (HB 236) that reviews all spending by departments and their purpose and override the Governor's veto of senate bill 148.
3. Recommend the "right-sizing" of government salaries where they never exceed the private sector. {Look at the elimination of retirement benefits for all new hires as this is not given in the private sector}
4. Promote deregulation and privatization in government which will reduce taxes and strengthen businesses. {What is government's role: protect its citizens. Eliminate the areas government over stepped like funding and maintaining golf courses, grants for pools, tennis courts, statues, flowers, etc.). Allow for the courts to be the decider in disputes between consumers and business. Regulating competitive businesses, such as gumball machines, gas marketers, telephones, cosmetologists, is not the job of government. Our four fathers were brilliant in setting up the 3 branches of government. The role of the judicial branch appears forgotten in much of the added regulations and laws.}
5. We need to eliminate the duplication of services: such as the Governor's office of Highway Safety and provide those services in the Department of Public Safety.
 - a. Eliminate anti-competitive regulations which drive up costs, create monopolies and restrict free trade such as the CON (Certificate of Need), which Ronald Reagan called upon all states to do in the 1980's.

While preparing for this meeting today over a Chinese lunch, (inside my fortune cookie was the following proverb:) "Consolidate rather than expand business projects in the near future." So, in closing **"We The People of Georgia"** deserve a **Fair Tax** system. Thank you again for your time and service on this council. **"The People's Tax Dollars"**

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