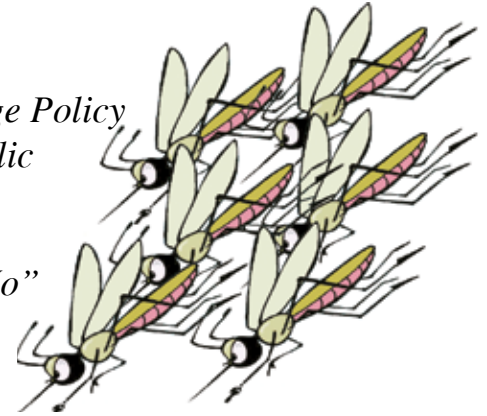


The Pests Are Back!!!

Like bothersome mosquitoes, those pests from the Maine Heritage Policy Center are back with yet another attempt at placing caps on public spending that would harm our students and schools.

The Maine Education Association is encouraging you to vote “No” on the November 3 ballot in opposition to:



TABOR II: Referendum Question #2

VOTE *"Do you want to change the existing formulas that limit state and local government spending and require voter approval by referendum for spending over those limits and for increases in state taxes?"*

TABOR II would impose a restrictive one-size-fits-all formula for state and local budgets that would slowly and steadily cut funding for schools, higher education, roads, public safety, health care, and services for the elderly.

It is a retread of TABOR I that was imported by the Heritage Policy Center (HPC) from Colorado and rejected by Maine voters in 2006 and a variation of the HPC-supported Palesky Tax Cap rejected in 2004.

This measure handcuffs local control and replaces it with rigid spending limits that can only be altered through a cumbersome, expensive budget process for school districts, town councils, county government, and the Maine Legislature.

TABOR II makes even less sense now than it did three years ago. Given the current recession, it could make things worse.

EXCISE TAX CAP: Referendum Question #4

VOTE *"Do you want to cut the rate of the municipal excise tax by an average of 55% on motor vehicles less than six years old and exempt hybrid and other alternative-energy and highly fuel-efficient motor vehicles from sales tax and three years of excise tax?"*

Under the guise of being environmentally friendly, the HPC would institute an Excise Tax Cap that slashes the tax revenues used by local communities to maintain roads and bridges, which in turn would force towns to let roads deteriorate, increase property taxes or cut other municipal services to make our roads safe.

This measure cuts the tax rates for cars five years old or younger and exempts hybrids or energy-efficient cars. But, it is just not fair. Those cars use the same roads and cause the same damage to our bridges that other cars do; the Excise Tax Cap favors those who can afford expensive new cars and trucks.

Two-thirds of all Mainers drive vehicles that are more than five years old, and passage of this law would mean no benefit for them -- and more potholes and more unsafe bridges for all of us.

If this cap is adopted, the Maine Municipal Association estimates a 40% loss of excise tax revenues.

What can you do to help defeat TABOR II and the Excise Tax Cap?

The formula for all successful campaigns comes down to “Educating, Organizing, & Mobilizing” supporters. To help win this fall, Association members need to educate Maine voters. Public polling shows that the more voters know about the adverse impacts of these two referenda, the more likely they are to vote against them.

Please volunteer to fight these ill-advised initiatives. Be part of a phone bank; hand out literature outside school events; help us set up meetings with community groups; contribute money; and, most of all, urge all of your friends, family and neighbors to vote “NO.”

