



CITIZENS
for
Limited Taxation

45 Years as the Voice of Massachusetts Taxpayers
Post Office Box 1147 □ Marblehead, Massachusetts 01945
(781) 639-9709 □ staff@cltg.org □ www.cltg.org

January, 2019

Dear CLT member or supporter, past and recent;

Massachusetts taxpayers start 2019 with a tax cut, another small descent toward the commonwealth's historic income tax rate of five percent. While the drop from 5.1% to 5.05% doesn't seem like much (and it isn't), it is a *very much belated* step in the right direction. CLT toiled so hard to collect the signatures then won the 2000 ballot campaign — *nineteen years ago* — to completely roll back the *then-eleven-year old* “*temporary*” tax hike seventeen years sooner than next year. Better late than never.

Next year (2020) the rate is expected to finally drop all the way back down to 5% — thirty years after it was imposed “temporarily,” over a generation ago.

After CLT's news release on Dec. 17 (enclosed), The Salem News noted in an editorial: “Gov. Charlie Baker celebrated careful financial management and the momentum of a strong economy. Both of these are nice — and strict budgeting is commendable — but it's hard to muster much appreciation over money we should've been getting all along.”

Citizens for Limited Taxation has been on hiatus, in a holding pattern, since operational funds ran out. Fortunately for Bay State taxpayers, so too was the Legislature, home enjoying its extended taxpayer-paid vacation from August until earlier this month. I've been paying CLT's ongoing expenses and bills out of my pocket to keep things going on low-burner, such as for the many newspaper subscriptions (a few hundred bucks each month), the CLT Updates e-mail list service, computer software license renewals, and other basic operating costs, while we've continued the usual research, member updates, and remained available for interviews by the news media.

Though I escaped Taxachusetts in mid-November soon after the election, I find I'm angrier than ever with how politics and government is done to the good people like

— *Continued* —

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

you that I left behind. That's no doubt from a newfound perspective. Experiencing firsthand just how unobtrusive government is here and can be, and how relatively inexpensive life is in Kentucky, was a startling revelation for me even after my months of extensive research and high expectations. *It doesn't have to be The Massachusetts Way.*

Every morning I still dig into all the political news in Massachusetts, watch over what's being done to taxpayers, and what's coming at you next — as those who subscribe to the CLT Updates and receive my regular reports know. I remain disgusted by what I uncover, just more so now. I'd never fully appreciated *how much better* life can be.

The only change following the election is for the worse, with taxpayer champions like Rep. Jim Lyons (R-Andover) losing his re-election campaign, and *even more radical* “progressive” Democrats defeating *Democrat* incumbents in the primary, taking their seats in the Legislature, further emboldening the Left. There are three *fewer* Republicans in the Legislature today than the handful that existed just a month ago.

When we start thinking things can't get worse in Massachusetts they do. For instance, the State House News Service reported last month:

“Population growth in Massachusetts is outpacing that of other New England states, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, and Secretary of State William Galvin is now predicting that the state should be able to hold on to all nine seats in Congress with an accurate head count in 2020. . . .

“Galvin said that while the state continues to lose residents to other states, those losses are more than offset by international immigration. ‘These numbers show how important it is that we ensure every person in Massachusetts is counted in the 2020 Census, whether or not they are United States citizens,’ Galvin said.”

Productive, taxpaying citizens are fleeing the commonwealth in droves (and I'm now among that exodus). We fugitives are being more than replaced by an incoming wave of warm bodies “whether or not they are United States citizens,” who no doubt pay less in taxes if any and require more “public assistance.” This demographic disruption does not bode well for productive taxpayers left behind, regardless of how giddy it makes Secretary Galvin feel.

At the end of July during the closing moments of the last legislative session, CLT and a disparate rapid-response coalition of left-wing groups managed to stop the devious end-run around our Proposition 2½, each for its own purpose. We didn't *defeat* this second attempt at a "Community Benefits District" bill. After a tremendous effort hastily executed we created enough last-minute discomfort and opposition among legislators to *prevent it from coming up for a vote*. The sponsor of this insidious new Neighborhood Government/Neighborhood Tax scheme, Sen. Brendan Crighton (D-Lynn), vowed to bring it back this legislative session. Taxpayers should heed his threat, be prepared to stop it again — or to start paying a whole new, *additional* property tax.

The question you must now ask yourself is: do you want to take this on with — *or without* — Citizens for Limited Taxation at your side, leading the opposition again?

When I announced in late July that Citizens for Limited Taxation was shutting down due to lack of support, along with contributions that stretched its life out for a few more months we were inundated with members' notes, letters, e-mails, and phone calls pleading that we not abandon them. It was frequently pointed out to me that with a computer and a phone I can continue doing from *anywhere* what I do in Marblehead.

I felt awful abandoning so many long-time, loyal friends and long-time CLT members, and I couldn't argue with that point — after all, we stopped that "Neighborhood Tax" with me shackled to my desk in Marblehead on the phone in front of my computer for two straight weeks around the clock. *I could have* been anywhere and orchestrated our victory just as well.

As CLT's executive director I am merely the conductor. You and all CLT members are the orchestra that creates the music! It was *your* calls to *your* legislators that turned back that tsunami in that eleventh hour and saved property-owners millions.

So I rented a 5'x8' U-Haul trailer, loaded up my desk, office chair, entire computer and phone systems, and other mission-critical office equipment, towed it all behind for 1,100 miles when I left Marblehead behind. (For a change, instead of me being shackled to my desk, the desk was shackled to me!) When the moving company truck finally showed up a week after my arrival with all my other household belongings, I already had the systems up and running, was connected to broadband cable, and had been back to CLT business for days. Since then I've been toiling for Bay State taxpayers as usual (though out-of-pocket) — from my new location. That was the test, and it *can* be done.

If there is sufficient interest — and support. Otherwise why am I bothering?

Which is exactly where we left off in July when I announced the end of CLT due to lack of support.

Since then I agreed to see if running CLT from here can be done, and it can. I also agreed to send a poll out to members, recent and lapsed, once I'm settled in; one final shot to determine if there is any desire for Citizens for Limited Taxation to be reignited, the torch relit — to decide once and for all if there is enough *support* now to bother.

CLT has made it to "45 Years as the Voice of Massachusetts Taxpayers," which is very gratifying to me in and of itself. If it ends right here and now I'll be good with that.

It's up to you and all other members past and recent. I've kept another promise with this letter, and I will be satisfied with the outcome whatever the decision — yours and that of the many others who are reading this.

If you feel there is no further need for Citizens for Limited Taxation, then your response should be to do nothing. Nothing is one of the two responses to this poll.

Thanks for your past support,

Chip Ford

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chip Ford", written in a cursive style.

Executive Director

Secure donations can still be made online immediately at:

<http://cltg.org/contribution.htm>

PLEASE NOTE: Citizens Economic Research Foundation, Inc. (CERF), CLT's 501(c)3 tax-exempt educational organization, has been terminated with the Internal Revenue Service and its bank account has been closed. CERF no longer exists; therefore we no longer can accept any previously-tax-deductible contributions to it.



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44 Years as the Voice of Massachusetts Taxpayers
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CLT News Release

December 17, 2018

Congratulations taxpayers — You just might outlive history!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Chip Ford, Executive Director

Hang in there for another year and you might live long enough to see Hell freeze over!

The "temporary, 18-month" income tax hike of 1989 might finally return to its historic 5 percent a year from next month, three decades behind *The Promise*.

For those who don't recall — and after three decades of living under a "temporary" tax hike we expect there will be many — it was imposed after Gov. Michael S. Dukakis lost his bid to become president of the United States running on "The Massachusetts Miracle" that, like his campaign, was sputtering and ran out of gas. The defeated candidate returned to his day job in the Bay State and hiked taxes to pay for the state's overspending and dodged Medicaid payments. It was promised back then that the "temporary" tax hike would be imposed only "for 18-months," until the hidden bills were bailed out.

The state budget back then was a mere \$12 Billion, compared to today's \$42 Billion of spending.

The victorious President George H. W. Bush served one four-year term (1989-93), followed by presidents Bill Clinton (two terms, 1993–2001), George W. Bush (two terms, 2001–2009), Barack Obama (two terms, 2009–2017), and now President Trump since 2017. History has moved ahead.

Still the "temporary" state income tax hike lives on like a vampire.

Voters mandated that it be rolled back to 5 percent with their overwhelming vote on the 2000 ballot. (The same election that made George W. Bush the 43rd President of

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the United States for the first of his two terms.)

The Legislature responded two years later with a too-typical Beacon Hill middle-finger salute and "froze" the will of the voters and their tax rollback at 5.3 percent, the insult orchestrated by then-House Speaker Thomas Finneran and then-Senate President Thomas Birmingham. That was before Finneran was indicted and convicted by the feds and resigned as the next in line of disgraced felonious House Speakers, followed by convicted House Speaker Sal DiMasi. The current House Speaker is about to become the longest continuously-serving in state history.

History has moved ahead.

Where were you in July of 1989, when the income tax was raised "temporarily — for 18 months"?

Citizens for Limited Taxation was fighting to oppose its passage, then led the petition drive and ballot question campaign in 2000 that mandated it finally be rolled back to 5 percent.

But taxpayers' lifetime advocate, executive director emeritus Barbara Anderson, didn't live long enough to see her decades of effort succeed. She passed away in 2016, the last time the tax was reduced by a miniscule five one-hundredths of one percent, to 5.10. She died twenty-seven years after the "temporary" tax was imposed, a generation later.

How many more taxpayers have died or will before the Legislature keeps its 1989 promise to them?

Pardon us if we're not popping the champagne corks. 5.05 percent is a step in the right direction, but it is too little much, *much* too late.

It is most important for all of us to remember this bitter lesson of history the next time a politician makes a promise.

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CLT's Proposition 2½ and the Auto Excise (Tax)

Most people know Proposition 2½ as the Citizens for Limited Taxation initiative petition and 1980 ballot question that limited property tax increases to not more than 2.5 percent per year.

But they are often unaware, or forget, that since 1980 it also reduced the annual municipal automobile excise from \$66 per thousand dollars of a vehicle's assessed value to \$25 per thousand dollars of its assessed value — a 62% savings.

This table shows how much CLT's Proposition 2½ saves you every year, year after year, just in your auto excise (tax).

VALUATION	CURRENT EXCISE	PREVIOUS EXCISE	YOUR SAVINGS
\$1,000	\$25	\$66	\$41
\$2,000	\$50	\$132	\$82
\$3,000	\$75	\$198	\$123
\$4,000	\$100	\$264	\$164
\$5,000	\$125	\$330	\$205
\$6,000	\$150	\$396	\$256
\$7,000	\$175	\$462	\$287
\$8,000	\$200	\$528	\$328
\$9,000	\$225	\$594	\$369
\$10,000	\$250	\$660	\$410
\$11,000	\$275	\$726	\$451
\$12,000	\$300	\$792	\$492
\$13,000	\$325	\$852	\$533
\$14,000	\$350	\$924	\$574
\$15,000	\$375	\$990	\$615
\$16,000	\$400	\$1,056	\$656
\$17,000	\$425	\$1,122	\$697
\$18,000	\$450	\$1,188	\$738
\$19,000	\$475	\$1,254	\$779
\$20,000	\$500	\$1,320	\$820
\$21,000	\$525	\$1,386	\$861
\$22,000	\$550	\$1,452	\$902
\$23,000	\$575	\$1,518	\$943
\$24,000	\$600	\$1,582	\$984
\$25,000	\$625	\$1,650	\$1,025
\$26,000	\$650	\$1,716	\$1,066
\$27,000	\$675	\$1,782	\$1,107
\$28,000	\$700	\$1,842	\$1,148
\$29,000	\$725	\$1,914	\$1,189
\$30,000	\$750	\$1,980	\$1,230
\$35,000	\$875	\$2,310	\$1,435
\$40,000	\$1,000	\$2,640	\$1,640

**Here's my vote to reignite CLT for 2019
Yes — keep it going for us taxpayers!**

Enclosed is my contribution of:

OTHER _____ \$1000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$35

Please Print Clearly

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ APT #: _____

CITY/TOWN: _____ ZIP: _____ - _____

PHONE: () _____ - _____

E-MAIL?: _____

Please make your check payable to CLT

– SEE BACK FOR MORE INFORMATION –

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

(PLEASE PRINT VERY CLEARLY)

**You can make a credit card contribution at:
www.cltg.org/contribution.htm**

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.

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POLL

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**IMPORTANT POLL ENCLOSED:
JUMPSTART CLT FOR 2019?**