



Press Release

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November 3, 2022

Defenders of MA's Flat Tax Remind Voters of the Lessons of 1994 Ballot Question Fight Before They Vote on Question 1.

Democratic and Republican Lawmakers Urge their Voters to Vote NO on Questions 1 and 4.

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Fiscal Alliance hosted a virtual press conference with various people of different political ideologies, parties, and interests to make their case to the media and the public to vote No on Question 1 and No on Question 4 ahead of Tuesday's Election.

MassFiscal hosted **Chip Ford** of the **Citizens for Limited Taxation**, and **Chris Anderson** of the **Massachusetts High Tech Council**. Chip and Chris worked together during the last graduated income tax ballot question in 1994, and they shared the warning that applied in 1994 election for next week's ballot Question 1.

"What can be more fair than every taxpayer paying the same rate – the very definition of fairness?" asked Chip Ford, executive director of Citizens for Limited Taxation, which was founded in 1975 to oppose and defeat the fourth graduated income tax constitutional amendment on the 1976 ballot, then led the opposition that defeated the fifth attempt on the 1994 ballot. "It seems that deception is often a part of these proposals and this sixth attempt is no different," Ford added. "Five times now, voters have not been fooled and resoundingly defeated all past assaults on the flat tax. Let's defeat it once again and keep the income tax fair and equal," said Chip Ford.

"The Mass. High Tech Council's mission is to create and protect conditions that support investment, job growth, and a strong quality of life for Massachusetts employers and their employees. This led us to support retaining the flat tax requirement in the Massachusetts Constitution in 1994 and further compels us to oppose Question 1 this year. The voters were right to say no to the idea of abandoning our constitutional protection in 1994 and they should do the same next week. The consequences of an 80% income tax surcharge on nest egg retirement investments like the sale of a home, or on small businesses in Massachusetts will never be a good idea and would be a reality if Question 1 is passed. As the voters did in 1994, we hope they say no next week," said Chris Anderson.

Christopher Carlozzi, State Director of the **National Federation of Independent Business in Massachusetts** was joined by many small business owners who have various backgrounds but share their concern with Question 1. **Luke Noble** of North Andover is a certified financial planner and accredited estate planner, and is the CEO of Noble Financial Group, LLC, which has offices in Massachusetts and Florida. Luke warned that clients will flee to Florida and to other states if Question 1 is passed, and those discussions have been ongoing all year leading up to Tuesday's election.

Ann Sullivan of Dedham owns a few small businesses including an excavation company, and she warned that if Question 1 is passed, construction costs will increase and eat into the retirement nest eggs of small business owners like herself.

Toby Burr is a Marion resident and longtime small business owner of Burr Brother's Boats. Toby warned that although the tax will not impact him with his annual income, it will impact his customers, which will have a negative impact on his small business, and the many blue-collar workers he employs.

Sue Curtis was a resident of Andover but recently moved to New Hampshire. Sue and her husband own Cooperstown Environmental, a successful small business located in Andover, MA. Their small business offers environmental consulting and Sue warned that the business climate along the Massachusetts and New Hampshire border will become even more advantageous for New Hampshire if Question 1 is passed. Like many small business owners in her situation, they can move the business up to New Hampshire if Question 1 is passed.

Mark Dickinson of Scituate, is a successful entrepreneur who still operates his own small business and has invested in many other small businesses as an "angel investor." At one point, Mark became a resident of Arizona primarily for tax purposes and returned back to Massachusetts to be closer to his adult children. However, Mark warned that if Question 1 is passed, he could easily move to New Hampshire and has already begun the process of purchasing property in case Question 1 is passed. Mark represents the type of taxpayer states are trying not to lose to Florida and New Hampshire.

Democratic and Republican lawmakers joined to urge their constituents to vote No on Questions 1 and 4. State Senator **Ryan Fattman** (R-Sutton), State Representatives **Jeff Turco** (D-Winthrop), **Colleen Garry** (D-Dracut), **Steven Xiarhos** (R-Barnstable), **Nick Boldyga** (R-Southwick), and **David DeCoste** (R-Norwell) came together to show bi-partisan support to vote NO on the two questions. They echoed the points made on Question 1 and warned that Question 4, which would give driver's license to illegal immigrants would lead to problems down the road. Rep. **Turco**, a Democrat from outside of Boston voted in favor of the graduated income tax proposal to go before the voters when it was before the legislature and is now warning his voters to vote against it as a ballot question. Reps. **Turco and Garry**, both Democrats in the House, warned against Question 4, telling their constituents that giving a driver's license to an illegal immigrant will not make our roads safer, echoing the points made in the Governor's veto letter.

Rep. Steven **Xiarhos**, who served and protected the community for over 40 years in law enforcement, rising through the ranks from a seasonal Patrol Officer to Deputy Chief of Police,

said Question 4 will not make our community or roads safer. Rep. Xiarhos said in order to keep people safe, it's important for law enforcement officers to be able to accurately identify anyone they're dealing with. Usually, a driver's license is a good indicator of identity, but as Governor Baker noted when he vetoed this bill, the Registry of Motor Vehicles does not have the ability to verify the identity of persons who are not in this country legally and who seek to establish identity based on consular documents from other nations. Rep. Xiarhos echoed the points the Governor warned, with this law a standard Massachusetts driver's license will no longer confirm that a person is who they say they are.

Rep. Nick **Boldyga**, who was a police officer and Board of Selectman before being elected to the legislature warned that Question 4 will not make the roads safer, and in fact will result in the opposite. Rep. Boldyga is just one of the few Massachusetts lawmakers who served in law enforcement and warned that his district has ten towns, many of which are small, and they do not have the resources to handle the implementation of Question 4. Rep. **DeCoste** and Senator **Fattman** said many of their constituents are worried that if Question 4 is passed, the Registry of Motor Vehicles will be overwhelmed because they are not equipped to deal with such a complicated matter, which should be handled at the federal level first. Like Governor Baker's veto letter, the lawmakers warn that a MA driver's license would not be able to determine someone's true identify if Question 4 is passed and many town clerks will not be able to communicate with the Registry of Motor Vehicle to determine a new voter's citizenship status.

"No matter where you live, no matter if you think your vote doesn't count in Massachusetts, your vote counts for these ballot questions. I will be voting NO on 1, voting NO on 4 and Voting NO on all 4. That's the simplest advice we can give any voters," concluded **Paul Diego Craney**, spokesperson for Massachusetts Fiscal Alliance.

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Massachusetts Fiscal Alliance advocates for fiscal responsibility, transparency, and accountability in state government and increased economic opportunity for the people of our Commonwealth.