

# A Brief Analysis of Voter Behavior Regarding Tax Initiatives

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From 1978 to March 2000

Part of the Citizen Lawmaker Series of Educational Tools

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**Citizen Lawmaker Press**

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**Washington, DC**

## **What is the Initiative & Referendum Institute?**

In 1998, in recognition of the initiative and referendum process' influence on America, the Initiative & Referendum Institute was founded. The Institute, a 501(c)(3) non-profit non-partisan research and educational organization, is dedicated to educating the citizens about how the initiative and referendum process has been utilized and in providing information to the citizens so they understand and know how to utilize the process. No other organization does what we do.

Edwin Meese, III, former U.S. Attorney General under President Ronald Reagan, had this to say about the Institute, "[T]he Initiative & Referendum Institute performs a valuable service to the Nation by providing research and educational programs to protect and expand the democratic process of initiative and referendum by the people in the several states. Having this electoral ability is a critical 'safety valve' for effective citizenship."

The Initiative & Referendum Institute extensively studies the initiative and referendum process and publishes papers and monographs addressing its effect on public policy, citizen participation and its reflection of trends in American thought and culture. We also research and produce a state-by-state guide to the initiative and referendum process that can be used by activists, and we work to educate and update the public on how the process is being utilized across the country. We analyze the relationship between voters and their elected lawmakers and when and why the people turn to initiative and referendum to enact changes in state and local law. The Initiative & Referendum Institute has garnered significant media attention. We have been interviewed or cited by numerous media outlets including, ABC News, Voter News Service, CBS Radio, Pacific Radio Network, CNN, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *The Chicago Tribune*, Fox News Channel, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *The News Hour with Jim Lehrer*, *The National Journal*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Governing Magazine*, *USA Today*, Court TV's "Supreme Court Watch" and "Washington Watch", *The Economist*, National Public Radio, *Campaigns and Elections Magazine*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *Congressional Quarterly*, and dozens of other publications, newspapers and radio stations around the world.

The Institute is uniquely qualified to undertake this mission. Comprising the Institute's Board of Directors, Advisory Board and Legal Advisory Board are some of the world's leading authorities on the initiative and referendum process, including prominent scholars; experienced activists - who know the nuts and bolts of the process and its use; skilled attorneys; and political leaders who have seen first hand the necessity of having a process through which citizens can directly reform their government.

## **A Brief Analysis of Voter Behavior Regarding Tax Initiatives, from 1978 to March 2000**

### **Abstract**

Americans have probably put no other issue before their fellow voters more than the issue of taxes. From America's first two statewide tax initiatives on Oregon's 1906 ballot (one imposing a gross earnings tax on telephone and telegraph companies and the other imposing a gross earnings tax on sleeping, refrigerator and oil car companies) to Oregon's 1999 tax initiative that cut car tab fees to \$30 and mandated a vote of the people for all future tax or fee increases, the American people have used the initiative process to re-shape tax policy - often against the will and advice of the political establishment.

This paper examines the record of tax initiatives from 1978 to 1999 to develop a blueprint of citizen behavior when it comes to these types of initiatives. The evidence shows that voters are not reckless in their tax-decision making, that the majority of all tax measures fail, and that when tax measures do pass it's usually the result of long-term dissatisfaction with current tax policy that elected officials have failed to address.

What kind of tax policy were voters trying to enact at the ballot box in the 80's and 90's? First and foremost - a stable tax policy. They didn't want uncontrollable inflation pushing them into higher income tax brackets. They didn't want to dramatically shift the tax structure around in ways that could have consequences that they couldn't foresee. They wanted assurance that taxes (especially property taxes, which ate at their homes, cars and other property) would not grow unpredictably year after year. In recent years, with trust in elected officials at an all-time low, they have indicated that they want to have the final say when it comes to the adoption of new taxes - so that they can take into account all the personal financial factors that affect their lives that legislators can not.

But while voters have sought a stable tax policy, they have not necessarily sought a low-tax one. In deed, the record shows that most anti-tax initiatives fail, and that voters do approve tax increases when they feel it is necessary. Voters may at times cut taxes, and at other times raise taxes - but what they want most is security, the security of knowing that the taxes they pay and the public services that they receive in return are within their control.

### **Overview**

For over 100 years, voters have been using the initiative process to reform government, foster debate, and change the public policy that affects their lives. One of the most defining points of 20<sup>th</sup> century American democracy was the use of the initiative process by everyday

Americans to shape the institutions around them. From women's suffrage to the term limits movement, the initiative has been a major tool allowing voters to change laws when their elected officials, for whatever reasons, would not. In 1998 alone, while elected officials were avoiding such issues as medical marijuana, affirmative action, term limits, tax limits and animal rights, voters were taking those issues on themselves and shaping public policy to meet their needs.

Americans have probably put no other issue before their fellow voters more than the issue of taxes. From America's first two statewide tax initiatives on Oregon's 1906 ballot (one imposing a gross earning tax on telephone and telegraph companies and the other imposing a gross earning tax on sleeping, refrigerator and oil car companies) to Washington's 1999 tax initiative that cut car tab fees to \$30 and mandated a vote of the people for all future tax or fee increases, the American people have used the initiative process to re-shape tax policy – often against the will and advice of the political establishment.

Much has been written about the people's desire to change tax policy through the use of the initiative. Most of it deals with the issue of whether or not voters *should* be changing tax policy and whether they are smart enough to make the same fiscal choices at the ballot-box that their elected officials are required to make everyday. That debate has generally been divided into two camps. One side argues that tax initiatives lead to a kind of fiscal anarchy where either voters enact a new tax policy in which they can not foresee the long term consequences; or, lacking the institutional memory of legislatures, they enact tax measures in such a haphazardly fashion that fiscal instability becomes the norm. The other side argues that tax initiatives represent Jeffersonian Democracy at its best and that since it's the people's money that is being debated it should be the people that decide what to do or not do with it.

Additionally, there are many studies that focus narrowly on analyzing one particular tax initiative (such as California's 1978 Proposition 13) or one type of initiative (such as tax limitation measures) for their effect on state fiscal policy. In many cases, analyzing the effects of a particular ballot initiative requires the making of many normative judgements.

This paper won't examine the political or philosophical implications of allowing voters to initiate tax policy, ignoring whether or not voter *should* be trying to change tax policy, and admitting that like it or not voters *are* trying to change tax policy. Nor will this paper examine the effects of tax initiatives on state fiscal policy – normative or not.

Instead this paper will simply examine the record of tax initiatives from 1978 to March 2000 to develop a blueprint of citizen behavior when it comes to these types of initiatives. This blueprint may aid scholars in addressing such questions as: do voters vote on tax initiatives haphazardly, without regard to long-term effects; do voters seek to

radically change tax policy; and do voters seek to use the initiative process to totally bind the hands of elected officials.

Although this paper is more informative than analytical, several conclusions can be drawn from the evidence presented herein. The evidence shows that voters are not reckless in their tax-decision making, that the majority of all tax measures fail, and that when tax measures do pass it's usually the result of long-term dissatisfaction with current tax policy that elected officials have failed to address. Most importantly, this paper concludes that the record shows that the most important fiscal policy that voters seek is stability – stability in tax rates, stability in the level of tax increases, stability in the overall tax structure. Voters are afraid of rapid change and generally favor moderate tax measures over extreme ones and seek a tax policy that is somewhat static and easy to plan for the future under.

This paper only examines tax initiatives – whereby citizens, through the use of the petition process, place tax-related measures on the ballot for a popular vote. This paper does not examine legislative referendums – whereby the legislature puts a measure on the ballot; or popular referendums –whereby citizens, through the use of the petition process, place recently approved legislative acts on the ballot for popular approval or rejection. Additionally, this paper does not examine initiatives dealing with tax credits or vouchers for education, bond issues, or the regulation of public utility rates or fees.

### **General Observations**

From 1978 to March 2000 there were 131 tax initiatives on a statewide ballot. (See Appendix A for a full listing.) 87 of those measures (66%) could be characterized as anti-tax, in that they cut, abolished or limited taxes in some fashion. 27 measures (21%) could be characterized as pro-tax initiatives, in that they raised or extended taxes. The remaining 17 initiatives either shifted taxes around (lowering them for some while raising them for others or increasing one type of tax while decreasing another) or were miscellaneous tax measures.

Out of the 131 tax initiatives on the ballot from 1978 to March 2000, only 51 passed – or 39%. Thus, voters tended to overwhelmingly defeat the majority of all tax initiatives. The percentage approved, 39%, is significant because it is less than the percentage of all initiatives of every subject combined approved from 1904 to 1998 -- 41%. (Out of the 1,902 statewide initiatives that have ever appeared on the ballot, only 787 have been approved by the voters.)

This suggests two things: One, that voters on average don't support tax initiatives any more than they do other initiative subjects; and two, since tax initiatives tend to be some of the most heavily criticized initiatives on the ballot (especially criticized by the political establishment), one

might think this heated criticism by elected authorities would dampen the approval rating of tax measures as compared to other matters. But, it does not appear to have done so.

But looking at the total number of tax-related initiatives on the ballot and the overall passage rate doesn't tell the whole story. While there have been 131 statewide tax initiatives on the ballot since 1978, only 87 of them can be characterized as 'anti-tax', and only 41 of those 'anti-tax' initiatives have passed (47%). On the other hand, there have been 27 'pro-tax' initiatives on the ballot since 1978, and 10 of them have passed (37%). Thus, from 1978 to March 2000 there has been on average a 10-point difference in the passage rates between pro- and anti- tax initiatives. This suggests that while voters tend to favor 'pro-tax' initiatives roughly the same amount as all other initiatives, they favor measures that cut or limits taxes significantly more than the average initiative.

Voter opposition to taxes as reflected in their approval or disapproval of tax initiatives has grown over the last couple of decades. While 40% of all 'pro-tax' initiatives on the ballot between 1978 and 1989 passed, only 35% of such measures were approved between 1990 and March 2000. Additionally, while 43% of all 'anti-tax' initiatives on the ballot between 1978 and 1989 passed, 53% of all anti-tax initiatives on the ballot between 1990 and March 2000 passed. Even more interesting is the fact that a whopping 62% of all 'anti-tax' initiatives on the ballot from 1996-March 2000 passed. This suggests that a possible new tax 'revolution' is on the way. In deed, voter approval of Washington's 1999 anti-car tax initiative I-695 (viewed by many as one of the strongest anti-tax initiatives to have ever been approved) is seen by many as being the "shot heard around the world" for the '00s as California's 1978 Proposition 13 was for the '80s.

But looks can be deceiving. After receiving several big victories in 1978 and 1980, anti-tax forces went on to lose a string of campaigns – so many in fact that many pundits had written the movement off. Those pundits ate their words in the '90s when anti-tax sentiment surfaced again culminating in the passage of many stringent 'anti-tax' measures, of which Measure 695 was just the last one. But both sides miss the larger picture. Voters, on a whole, are not radically anti-tax or even opposed to the politician's power to tax. In both the early '80s and the late '90s circumstances arose that led voters to approve anti-tax measures. These circumstances (namely increasingly burdensome taxes and reluctance or inability of legislators to address the issue) have caused voters to take power into their own hands. They might not generally seek the power to control fiscal policy, or the power to limit politicians, but they have taken it on when they have felt it necessary. When legislators address the tax issue (most notably after the passage of Proposition 13) we see a notable drop-off in the approval rate of anti-tax measures – indicating that voters are not so much concerned with stripping legislators of their fiscal power per

se, as they are with ensuring that legislators are at least somewhat responsive to taxpayer needs.

### **Analysis by Type**

Note: Some tax measures fall into more than one category, and the analysis of measures by "type" reflects this. Thus, the total number of "measures by type" will be greater than the total number actually on the ballot, as some measures will be listed and analyzed in more than one category.

### **A) Tax Limitation Measures**

The first type of tax initiative to examine is tax limitation initiatives. These measures are designed to limit, either the level of taxes, the rate of increases in taxes, or the ability to raise new taxes. Since 1978, there have been four kinds of tax limit initiatives on the ballot: Proposition 13-like, income tax limits, general tax limits, and super majority/voter approval requirements.

### **PROPOSITION 13-LIKE**

These measures, beginning with California's 1978 Proposition 13, generally have the following in common: they typically reduce existing property tax levies, while enacting a strict limit (usually 1.5% a year) on the allowable annual increase in the tax.

Since 1978 there have been 23 such measures on the ballot in 11 states. Only 9 have passed, or 39% -- roughly the same average as tax measures overall, as well as all initiatives in general. But what's interesting is not so much that only 39% passed, but when those 39% passed. In 1978, there were four such measures on the ballot (California, Idaho, Nevada, and Oregon.) All but Oregon passed. This, combined with the victory of other types of anti-tax measures around the country that year, led many political pundits to speak of a brewing tax revolution. A rush of anti-tax measures hit the 1980 ballot -- 13 in fact, 5 of them modeled after Proposition 13. 4 of those 5 Proposition 13 copycats failed, as did 4 of the remaining 8 anti-tax measures. This led many pundits to claim the tax revolt was dead. In deed, from '82 to '88 five more Proposition 13-like initiatives went on to fail, and only one passed. But in both cases -- the declaration of the tax revolt and the obituary on the tax revolt -- people missed the point. Proposition 13 and all the measures that followed were never about radical changes in the tax structure or tying the hands of the legislators. They were about voters doing what they felt had to be done. Hurt by a decade of taxes and inflation, voters wanted tax relief but were not getting it from the legislatures. When voters proved at the ballot box that they were serious, most states went on to pass some form of tax relief to alleviate taxpayer concerns. Once legislators gave taxpayers the

moderate tax relief they were seeking, anti-tax ballot measures began to fail – until the '90s where the cycle was repeated.

From 1990 to March 2000 voters approved 4 of the 8 Proposition 13-like initiatives on the ballot. This upsurge in approval rate for these kinds of measures (as well as other anti-tax measures as we shall see below) shows that voters are increasingly more supportive of tax relief and less trustful that legislators will deliver it on their own. With a booming economy and a growing surplus, many voters have felt that they should be getting some of their money back in the form of tax relief. Legislators have tended to ignore these demands and taxpayers have shown their frustration at the ballot box. To the extent that legislators start addressing this issue, we should start to see a decrease in the passage rates of these types of initiatives over the next couple of years.

### **INCOME TAX LIMIT**

These measures are similar to Proposition 13-like measures, except that they would place limits on the growth of income taxes. There was only one measure like this between 1978 and March 2000, and it failed.

### **GENERAL TAX LIMITS**

These measures seek to limit the overall tax burden by limiting the overall growth of taxes, revenue, or expenditures – typically to a set formula.

12 such measures were on the ballot since 1978, 7 passed (63%). In fact, these initiatives (which just limit the possible future growth of taxes and don't actually cut taxes) were the second most supported tax initiative in the '80s and '90s, even more popular than real tax cuts. (Initiatives indexing tax rates to inflation were the most popular.) This high approval rate suggests that a chief concern of voters may be stability. These measures generally limit the rate of tax growth to some discernible amount, allowing taxpayers to plan effectively for the future. It also suggests that voters may be more interested in keeping taxes from rising than cutting taxes outright – suggesting a bias in favor of maintaining the status quo. Interesting enough, however, 4 of the 5 overall tax limit measures that failed were in the '90s. This might suggest a growing slip in support for such measures. (Although one of the measures that failed was competing against another ballot measure that also limited taxes in some manner. That other measure won.)

### **SUPER MAJORITY/VOTER APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS**

These measures, while not limiting taxation per se, limit the ability to raise taxes by requiring that all new taxes or tax increases be approved by either a super majority of the legislature (typically 3/5 or 3/4) or a vote of the people.



These initiatives have not fared well at the ballot box. Out of the 24 on the ballot since 1978, only 8 have passed (33%.) One reason might be the public's reluctance to take away the legislature's discretion in such matters. What is interesting is that ALL 8 measures that passed were in the 1990s. 10 such measures went down to defeat from 1978 to 1988, and from 1990 to March 2000, 8 out of the 14 measures of this type won approval (54%.) This may suggest a looming tax revolution and/or a marked decrease in the trust voters place with their elected officials. Another possible reason is that, while state and federal budgets have been hitting record surpluses, politicians have passed very little of it on to the taxpayers. In many cases, elected officials have actually raised taxes. Such blindness to the needs of the voters may be responsible for the passage of many of these initiatives.

Indeed, proponents of the most sweeping of these measures, Washington's 1999 I-695 (which slashed car tab fees to only \$30 and required voter approval for all new tax or fee increases), used the Legislature's failure to address rapidly rising automobile property tax rates or return any of the \$1 billion tax surplus the state was expecting to the people, as a reason why voters should approve the measure. Voters overwhelmingly approved the measure.

## **B) Abolition of Certain Taxes**

These initiatives seek to abolish a whole type of state tax. (I.e. eliminating the state inheritance tax, eliminating the state sales tax, etc.) There have been 7 such measures on the ballot since 1978 and 4 of them have passed (57%). This success rate may be somewhat misleading, however. Ravished by taxes, recession and inflation in the '70s many families found their net wealth diminished considerably, and thought the future was extremely bleak for their children. In 1981, a Washington measure abolishing that state's gift and inheritance tax won overwhelmingly. The following year two similar initiatives repealing California's inheritance tax passed by considerable margins there, as well. In both cases, a decade of taxes and inflation, high inheritance and legislative reluctance to deal with the issue led voters do something radical: abolish a tax. Excluding these three measures, the only other tax abolition initiative to pass, was a 1994 Ohio initiative abolishing the wholesale tax on soft drinks.

## **C) Tax Cuts**

These initiatives are designed to cut or roll back taxes (usually a specific one) with no limits on future tax increases or overall tax and spending levels. Citizens put 12 such measures on the ballot since 1978, and 5 of them passed (44%). Although this is higher than the average passage rate of initiatives in general, it does show that voters won't

approve a tax-relief measure just to approve one. In deed, a 50% approval/rejection rate indicates that voters are still very selective even on pocketbook issues that effect them the most.

#### **D) Making Exemptions**

These type of initiatives seek to exempt a particular good or service from a particular tax (such as exempting food or clothing from the sales tax or exempting household goods from the property tax.) 10 such initiatives were on the ballot since 1978, with 5 of them passing (50%.) Since these measures are essentially tax cuts and reduce state revenue, it is not surprising that voters have tended to vote on them as selectively as they have tax cuts.

#### **E) Indexing to Inflation**

These type of initiatives seek to index graduated tax rates to inflation to end the problem of bracket creep where inflation pushes taxpayers into higher tax rates – increasing their tax burden even though their real income has not increased. These initiatives have been highly successful – all that have appeared on the ballot since 1978 have won. This suggest that voters are very supportive of the idea of tax stability, where their tax burden can not increase capriciously due matters fully out of their control.

#### **F) Prohibition on a Certain Tax**

This type of initiatives seeks to prohibit a certain type of tax from being adopted in a state. In 1986, Oregon voters defeated a tax measure that, among other things, barred the state from ever adopting a sales tax except by initiative. In 1988, Nevada voters approved an initiative prohibiting the adoption of a state income tax.

#### **G) Tax Increases**

These initiatives seek to raise revenue, by either raising a particular tax overall, raising a tax on a particular product (such as taxes on tobacco or gasoline) or eliminating certain tax deductions (such as property tax exemptions for religious organizations.) There have been 25 such measures on the ballot since 1978, and only 8 have passed (32%) – suggesting that voters are less supportive of tax-increasing initiatives then they are of other tax initiatives or other types of initiatives in general.

The type of tax increase initiative that has been on the ballot the most since 1978 has been taxes on tobacco, which have been on the ballot 8 times in 6 states, passing 5 times. The second largest group is taxes on natural resources (oil, gasoline, surface mining, etc.) which have been on the ballot 6 times in 5 states, but passing only once. The third largest group of tax-increasing initiatives has been sales tax increases, appearing on the ballot 4 times in 3 states, passing only once.

## **H) Tax Extensions**

These initiatives seek to extend into the future a temporarily imposed tax that is about to expire. Since 1978, there have only been two such measures, and both of them were successful attempts to extend Missouri's "temporary" tax – once in 1988, and then again in 1996 (extending it for 10 more years.)

## **I) Tax Shifts**

These types of initiatives either cut one tax (like a property tax) but raise another (like a sales tax), shift the burden of taxes (such as cutting taxes for the low-income while increasing them for the rich) or otherwise both cut and raise taxes. Out of the 15 on the ballot since 1978, only 1 has passed (.06%). Such an overwhelmingly failure rate suggests that voters are extremely skeptical of initiatives that dramatically change the overall tax structure. When given the choice between making complicated changes in the tax code that may help some well hurting others, voters vote for the status quo.

## **Conclusion**

Voter approval of California's 1978 Proposition 13 ushered in a new era in American democracy, one that went way beyond taxes. With Proposition 13, Californian voters – and voters around the country – found that if they weren't getting what they wanted from their elected officials they could use the initiative process to get it. And since then, citizens have been "getting it" every year. From term limits and campaign finance reform to medical marijuana and environmental protection measures, voters have been getting what they want without having to rely on politicians – who often have needs and goals different than the people they were elected to represent.

In the '80s and '90s Americans in initiative states used the initiative process to try to get the tax policy that they wanted. What kind of tax policy was it? First and foremost, stable. They didn't want uncontrollable inflation pushing them into higher income tax brackets. They didn't want to dramatically shift the tax structure around in ways that could have consequences that they couldn't foresee. They wanted assurance that taxes (especially property taxes, which ate at their homes, cars and other property) would not grow unpredictably year after year. In recent years, with trust in elected officials at an all-time low, they have indicated that they want to have the final say when it comes to the adoption of new taxes – so that they can take into account all the personal financial factors that affect their lives that legislators can not.

But while voters have sought a stable tax policy, they have not necessarily sought a low-tax one. In deed, the record shows that most

anti-tax initiative fail, and that voters do approve tax increases when they feel it is necessary.

Probably the most important lesson to take away from studying tax initiatives from 1978 to March 2000, is *don't discount voters*. If legislators fail to address their tax needs (as well as their other needs) voters will use the initiative to take it to the ballot and enact it themselves.

## APPENDIX: Tax Initiatives 1978-March 2000 - by type

### TAX LIMITATION MEASURES

#### Proposition 13-like

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	PASS?	FAIL?
November 7, 1978	CA	Property Tax Limit/Proposition 13	X	
November 7, 1978	ID	Restrict property valuation or tax changes.	X	
November 7, 1978	NV	Limit Property Taxes.	X	
November 7, 1978	OR	Limitations on ad valorem property taxes.		X
November 4, 1980	MA	Limit Local Taxes.	X	
November 4, 1980	MI	Reduce Property Taxes/ Voter Approval for new Taxes.		X
November 4, 1980	OR	Property Tax Limits		X
November 4, 1980	SD	Limiting real property taxes.		X
November 4, 1980	UT	Tax Limitation Act.		X
November 2, 1982	OR	Property Tax Limit.		X
November 6, 1984	NV	Limit Tax Increases/ Super Majority Requirement. <sup>1</sup>		X
November 6, 1984	OR	Property Tax Limit		X
November 4, 1986	MT	Limit property taxes to 1986 levels.	X	
November 4, 1986	OR	Limit property tax rate, assessed value increases.		X
November 8, 1988	SD	Limit Property Taxes.		X
November 6, 1990	CA	Changes the way personal property is taxed and limits the rate to 1% of value. Extends 2/3-vote requirement for legislative approval to new or increase in taxes and voter approval. <sup>2</sup>		X
November 6, 1990	OR	Set limits on property taxes and dedicate them to fund public schools and non-school government operations.	X	
November 3, 1992	FL	Limit homestead valuations.	X	
November 3, 1992	ID	Limit ad valorem property tax rates.		X
November 5, 1996	CA	Property Tax Limit.	X	
November 5, 1996	ID	Limit property taxes to one percent of value.		X
November 5, 1996	NE	Limits property taxes.		X
November 5, 1996	OR	Reduces and limits property taxes.	X	
<b>23 Initiatives</b>			<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>

<sup>1</sup> This measure is also listed in the Super Majority/ Voter Approval category because of its super majority requirement.

<sup>2</sup> This measure is also listed in the Super Majority/Voter Approval Requirements category because of its super majority and voter approval sections.

### Income Tax Limits

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	PASS?	FAIL?
November 3, 1980	CA	Limits personal income taxes to no more than 50% of those rates in effect for the 1978 taxable year.		X

### General Tax Limits

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	PASS?	FAIL?
November 7, 1978	CO	State Expenditure Limitations		X
November 7, 1978	MI	Tax Limitation (Headlee Amendment)	X	
November 6, 1979	WA	State Tax Revenue Limitation	X	
November 4, 1980	MO	Limit state and local taxes	X	
November 6, 1986	CA	Taxation, local governments and districts.	X	
November 6, 1986	MA	Limit state revenue tax increases.	X	
November 8, 1988	UT	Tax and Spending Limitations		X
November 6, 1990	CO	Limit Taxation.		X
November 2, 1993	WA	Expenditures Limit/Voter approval of new taxes. <sup>3</sup>	X	
November 2, 1993	WA	Expenditures and Revenue Limit/Repeals Certain Revenue Measures. <sup>4</sup>		X
November 8, 1994	FL	Revenue Limits	X	
November 10, 1998	NE	Slow growth of state and local government spending.		X
<b>12 Initiatives</b>			<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>

### Super Majority/Voter Approval Requirements

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	PASS?	FAIL?
November 7, 1978	MI	Voter approval for property tax increases.		X
November 4, 1980	AZ	2/3 Legislature to Raise property Taxes.		X
November 4, 1980	MI	Reduce property taxes, voter approval for new taxes.		X
November 8, 1983	OH	3/5 Majority of General Assembly to raise taxes.		X
November 6, 1984	CA	Super majority or voter approval to raise taxes.		X
November 6, 1984	MI	State/local tax rates set to those of 12/31/81. Voter approval to change them.		X
November 6, 1984	NV	Limit tax increases all level of government/ super majority requirements. <sup>5</sup>		X

<sup>3</sup> This measure is also listed in the Super Majority/ Voter Approval category because of its super majority requirement.

<sup>4</sup> This measure is also listed in the Tax Cuts category because of it repeals of certain tax increases.

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	PASS?	FAIL?
November 4, 1986	CO	Voter approval for tax increases.		X
November 4, 1986	MT	Abolish Property Tax; popular vote for tax change. <sup>6</sup>		X
November 8, 1988	CO	Voter approval; increases in tax revenues.		X
November 6, 1990	CA	Changes the way personal property is taxed and limits the rate to 1% of value. Extends 2/3-vote requirement for legislative approval to any new or increase in taxes and voter approval. <sup>7</sup>		X
November 2, 1992	AZ	2/3 vote of legislature to increase state revenue.	X	
March 10, 1992	OK	Revenue bills approval: voters or ¾ Legislature and Governor.	X	
November 3, 1992	CO	Voter approval: Tax Revenue Increases.	X	
November 2, 1993	WA	Expenditure Limits/Voter Approval for new taxes. <sup>8</sup>	X	
November 8, 1994	MO	Voter approval for all tax increases.		X
November 8, 1994	MT	Requires 2/3 vote of the legislature for any tax increase.		X
November 8, 1994	MT	Require voter approval of all new or increased taxes.		X
November 8, 1994	NV	Require a 2/3 vote in the legislature or a majority vote of the people to increase taxes.	X	
November 8, 1994	OR	Bars new or increased taxes without voter approval.		X
November 5, 1996	NV	Require 2/3 vote of the legislature to increase taxes.	X	
November 5, 1996	OR	Counts non-voters, as "no" voters on tax measures.		X
November 10, 1998	MT	Require voter approval of tax increases.	X	
November 2, 1999	WA	Slashes car tab fees to \$30 for a year, requires voter approval for all new tax increases. <sup>9</sup>	X	
<b>24 Measures</b>			<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>

### **Abolition of Certain Taxes**

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	PASS?	FAIL?
November 3, 1981	WA	Abolition of State inheritance and gift tax.	X	
November 2, 1982	CA	Abolishing gift and inheritance	X	

<sup>5</sup> This measure is also listed in the Proposition 13-Like category because of its limit on property tax assessment increases.

<sup>6</sup> This measure is also listed in the Abolition of Certain Taxes category because of its abolition of the state property tax.

<sup>7</sup> This measure is also listed in the Proposition 13-Like category because of its limit on property tax assessment increases.

<sup>8</sup> This measure is also listed in the General Tax Limits because of its limit on state expenditures.

<sup>9</sup> This measure is also listed in the Tax Cuts category because it slashed car tax tab fees to \$30.

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	PASS?	FAIL?
		taxes. (Miller)		
November 2, 1982	CA	Abolishing gift and inheritance taxes (Rogers)	X	
November 2, 1982	WA	Sales, other business taxes, replaced by franchise tax on corporations.		X
November 4, 1986	MT	Abolish property tax; popular vote for tax change. <sup>10</sup>		X
November 6, 1990	MT	Repeals existing taxes; charges on business exchange.		X
November 8, 1994	OH	Abolishing wholesale tax on soft drinks.	X	
<b>7 Initiatives</b>			<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

### Tax Cuts

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	PASS?	FAIL?
November 7, 1978	ND	Income tax rates: Individual, corporate.	X	
November 7, 1979	OK	Deduct individual Federal income tax from state income.		X
November 2, 1982	CO	Property Tax Cuts.	X	
November 8, 1983	OH	Repeal all property taxes since 1982.		X
November 4, 1986	OR	Exempts part of owner's home value from property tax, requires renters relief, bars sales tax except by initiative. <sup>11</sup>		X
November 8, 1988	UT	Tax Reductions.		X
November 5, 1991	WA	Rolls back property value for tax purposes the 1985 value of subsequence sales price.		X
November 3, 1993	WA	Repeals certain revenue measures/Enacts expenditure and revenue growth limits.		X
November 10, 1998	MA	Cut State income taxes.	X	
November 10, 1998	MT	Repeal Montana Retail Motor Fuel Marketing Act	X	
November 2, 1999	WA	Slashes car tab fees to \$30 for a year, requires voter approval for all new tax increases. <sup>12</sup>	X	
March 7, 2000	CA	Repeals 50 cent per pack cigarette tax increase approved by voters in 1998		X
<b>12 Initiatives</b>			<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>

<sup>10</sup> This measure is also listed in the Super Majority/Voter Approval Requirements category because of its voter approval section.

<sup>11</sup> This measure is also listed the Prohibiting a Certain Tax from being Enacted category because of its prohibition on the establishment of state sales tax.

<sup>12</sup> This measure is also listed in the Super Majority/Voter Approval Requirements category because of its voter approval section.



### Making Exemptions to Sales and Property Taxes

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	PASS?	FAIL?
November 7, 1978	AR	Food and medicine sales tax exemptions.		X
November 7, 1980	UT	Elimination of sales tax on food.		X
November 4, 1980	NV	Exempt household goods from taxation.	X	
November 4, 1980	NV	Exempt food from taxation.	X	
November 6, 1984	ID	Exempt food from sales tax.		X
November 6, 1984	WA	Excludes value of trade-in of like-kind property from selling price for sales tax computations.	X	
November 8, 1988	AR	Repeal property tax on household goods.		X
November 8, 1988	CO	Property tax exempt non-producing mining claims	X	
November 6, 1990	UT	Removal of state, local sales tax from food.		X
November 3, 1992	CA	End taxation of certain food products.	X	
<b>10 initiatives</b>			<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>

### Indexing to Inflation

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	PASS?	FAIL?
November 4, 1980	MT	Tax Indexing.	X	
November 2, 1982	CA	Income Tax Indexing	X	
November 2, 1982	ME	Abolish inflation-induced state income tax increases.	X	
<b>3 initiatives</b>			<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>

### Prohibiting a Certain Tax from being Enacted

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	PASS?	FAIL?
November 8, 1988	NV	Prohibit a state income tax.	X	
November 4, 1986	OR	Exempts part of owner's home value from property tax, requires renters relief, bars sales tax except by initiative. <sup>13</sup>		X
<b>2 initiatives</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

### Tax Increases

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	PASS?	FAIL?
August 8, 1978	MO	Increase gas tax from 7 to 10 cents.		X

<sup>13</sup> This measure is also listed in the Tax Cuts section because it also cuts taxes.

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	PASS?	FAIL?
June 3, 1980	CA	10% surtax on energy business.		X
November 4, 1980	ND	6.5% oil extraction tax, use of revenues.	X	
November 2, 1982	MO	One-cent sales tax increase.	X	
November 4, 1986	WA	Sales/use tax for conservation, recreation programs.		X
November 8, 1988	CA	Tobacco Tax.	X	
November 8, 1988	OR	Sin taxes to finance Intercollegiate Athletic Fund.		X
November 8, 1988	SD	Additional tax on surface mining.		X
June 11, 1989	WA	\$360 new taxes for family services, K-12 education.		X
June 12, 1990	ND	Sales, use, motor vehicle taxes for education.		X
November 6, 1990	CA	Alcohol surtax.		X
November 6, 1990	MT	Increase cigarette sales tax.		X
November 6, 1990	NV	Net profit tax, franchise fee for corporations.		X
November 3, 1992	CA	Increases state tax rates for top income taxpayers. Raises other taxes.	X	
November 3, 1992	MA	Taxes on oils, hazardous materials.		X
November 3, 1992	MA	Taxes on cigarettes and smokeless tobacco.	X	
November 3, 1992	ND	Water development, sales and use tax.		X
November 8, 1994	AZ	Tobacco Tax.	X	
November 8, 1994	CA	4% tax on retail sales of gasoline.		X
November 8, 1994	CO	Tobacco Tax.		X
November 5, 1996	CA	Increase taxes on the top income tax brackets.		X
November 5, 1996	CO	Eliminates property tax exemptions of religious and nonprofit organizations.		X
November 5, 1996	FL	Established a fee on everglade sugar production.		X
November 5, 1996	OR	Tobacco Tax.	X	
November 10, 1998	CA	Tobacco Tax.	X	
<b>25 initiatives</b>			<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>

### Tax Extensions

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	PASS?	FAIL?
November 8, 1988	MO	Extend use of sales and use tax.	X	
November 5, 1996	MO	Extends for 10 years a sales and use tax.	X	
<b>2 initiatives</b>			<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

### Tax Shifts

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	PASS?	FAIL?
November 4, 1980	MA	Provides state and local tax relief, establishes a policy to increase the community share of local education costs.		X
November 4, 1980	MI	Reduces property taxes, requires the state to raise revenues necessary for equal per-pupil funding of public schools.		X
November 2, 1982	ID	Home improvement exemption: ad valorem tax.	X	
November 2, 1982	WA	Sales, other business taxes replaced by franchise tax.		X
November 4, 1986	OR	Sales tax. Funds schools, reduces property taxes.		X
November 4, 1986	OR	State income tax changes, property tax relief.		X
November 6, 1990	MA	Change income tax law; regulate state agency fees		X
November 3, 1992	MI	Reduces current maximum property tax. Provides. Requires general state taxation for equal per-pupil school financing.		X
November 3, 1992	OR	Raises limit on property tax; renters' tax relief.		X
November 3, 1992	SD	Various tax reductions, redistributions.		X
November 8, 1994	MA	Graduated Income Tax – Amendment 6		X
November 8, 1994	MA	Graduated Income Tax – Amendment 7		X
November 8, 1994	OR	"Equal Tax" on trade to replace current taxes.		X
November 8, 1994	SD	Reduces property taxes and exempts groceries, clothing and utilities from sales tax. Imposes a personal and corporate income tax.		X
November 10, 1998	SD	Prohibits schools from being financed through property taxes. Requires the legislature to find other means.		X
<b>15 initiatives</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>

### Miscellaneous

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	PASS?	FAIL?
November 7, 1978	MT	Removes responsibility for certain property taxes from the state and		X

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	PASS?	FAIL?
		restores it to the counties under the direction of a State-County Equalization Committee.		
November 10, 1998	AZ	Would give Arizona candidates for federal office the option to pledge to support and vote for the elimination of the federal income tax and IRS through the passage of a nation consumption tax and permits "Signed the IRS elimination Pledge" to be shown on the ballot next to the pledging candidate's name.		X
<b>2 initiatives</b>				<b>2</b>