



**AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM**

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## **Electoral Races in Which Taxes Played a Dominant Role**

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**LIST WILL BE UPDATED  
AS WE RECEIVE MORE INFORMATION**

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### **California**

- ✚ In California's 76<sup>th</sup> Assembly District fiscal conservative Tricia Hunter (R) (who had the backing of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger) and union-backed college Professor Lori Saldana were competing for office. While Tricia Hunter signed the Taxpayer Protection Pledge and thereby committed to "oppose and vote against any and all efforts to increase taxes", Lori Saldana refused to rule out tax increases and declined offers to sign the Taxpayer Protection Pledge. However, she prevailed in the predominantly liberal district and defeated Tricia Hunter 54-41.
- ✚ On the other hand, four freshmen Pledge signers won their elections and will now represent the taxpayers of their districts: Mike Villines (H-29), Sam Blakeslee (H-33), Van Tran (H-68), and Chuck DeVore (H-70).

### **Georgia**

- ✚ In 2003, Gov. Sonny Perdue became the first Republican governor of Georgia since Reconstruction. But shortly after taking office, Gov. Perdue proposed tax increases. Republicans in the legislature were split over whether to back their governor or to stay true to principles.
- ✚ One who sided with the governor over the people was Rep. Buddy Childers (D, H-13, Pos. 1), thereby betraying the commitment he had made to taxpayers earlier by signing the Taxpayer Protection Pledge. After redistricting, Rep. Childers sought re-election in House District 14, facing challenger Barry Loudermilk (R),

who signed the Taxpayer Protection Pledge. The tax issue played a big role in the race. Barry Loudermilk defeated Childers 61%-39%.

- ✚ While a large number of Pledge signers did not seek re-election after redistricting, 18 new freshmen and signers of the Taxpayer Protection Pledge were elected into the legislature.

### Illinois

- ✚ Incumbent Caren Gordon (D, H-75) refused to sign the Taxpayer Protection Pledge, thereby leaving the door open for future tax increases. Her challenger Doug Hayse (R), a fiscal conservative, signed the Taxpayer Protection Pledge. While Hayse was able to close in on her, still the incumbent prevailed and defeated Hayse by a narrow 51% - 49%.

### Kansas

- ✚ The Kansas legislature fell three votes short this year of passing an increase in income, sales, and property taxes. Next year, the legislature is certain to try to raise taxes again.
- ✚ In Senate District-26, incumbent Sen. Phillip Journey (R), a Pledge signer, was being challenged by Rep. Daniel Thimesch (D). While Thimesch also signed the Taxpayer Protection Pledge, he broke it by voting for the income, sales, and property tax increases this year. Sen. Journey kept his Pledge.
- ✚ In Senate District 32, incumbent Sen. Greta Goodwin (D) voted to raise taxes on Kansans this year. Her opponent Ray LaBoeuf (R) signed the Taxpayer Protection Pledge, thereby vowing to “oppose and vote against any and all efforts to increase taxes.”
- ✚ In House District 13, Pledge signer Forrest Knox (R) saw an unusual challenge by a write-in candidate. He had clearly defeated his Republican primary opponent state Rep. Mary Compton earlier this year. Compton had signed the Pledge and broken it voting for several tax increases over the past years. She did not accept the first peoples’ ‘no’ for an answer and challenged Knox again in the general election, only to lose again – and very clearly - by 32% - 68%.

### Kentucky

- ✚ In Kentucky’s House District 46, Trace Chesser (R), a fiscal conservative who signed the Taxpayer Protection Pledge, made an attempt to unseat 20-year incumbent Rep. Larry Clark, House Speaker Pro Tem (D). Rep. Clark had refused to sign the Taxpayer Protection Pledge. In Kentucky, Clark has been compared to

Tom Daschle, coming from a conservative background but voting more like Ted Kennedy. While mounting an offensive campaign, Chesser could not defeat the well-known Clark and lost 47%-53.

- ✚ Fiscal conservative Chris Ratliff (R) took on incumbent Sen. Ray Jones (D) in Senate District 31. Chris Ratliff signed the Taxpayer Protection Pledge. Jones refused to vote on a budget or cut taxes, but was reported to support higher taxes. However, he prevailed and defeated Ratliff 61%-39%.
- ✚ In Senate District 37, Virginia Woodward (D) and Dana Seum Stephenson (R) are competing for an open seat. While Virginia Woodward refused to sign the Taxpayer Protection Pledge, Dana Seum Stephenson signed the Pledge and vowed to “oppose and vote against any and all efforts to increase taxes.” Voters chose her over Woodward by a margin of 51%-49%.

### Massachusetts

- ✚ State Representative Demetrius Atsalis (D, 2-Barnstable) voted for a humongous \$1.14 billion tax increase package in 2002. By doing so, he violated his commitment to taxpayers, which he made in 2001 by signing the Taxpayer Protection Pledge. He was challenged by fiscal conservative Pledge signer Ann Canedy (R) over the tax issue. Canedy came close, but the three term incumbent very narrowly prevailed by a margin 51%-49%.

### Nevada

- ✚ State Rep. Mark Manendo (D) voted for Gov. Kenny Guinn (R)’s \$833 million tax hike in 2003. He was challenged by Pledge signer Kris Munn (R), and the tax vote was the chief issue. Mark Manendo won 63-37%
- ✚ Rep. Harry Mortenson (D, H-42) broke his Pledge to taxpayers, which he signed in 1998, by voting for the \$833 million tax hike in 2003. He was challenged by fiscal conservative Bob Adney (R), who signed the Pledge. However, the long-term incumbent prevailed by a margin of 60% -40%.

### New Mexico

- ✚ Gov. Bill Richardson pushed several tax proposals in the last year, some of which have passed. It is expected that he will be back with further tax "reform" proposals that would be tax increases. In this context, a number of Pledge signing fiscal conservatives sought to challenge incumbent legislators, who were likely to

continue to go along with further tax hikes. However, the incumbents prevailed. In a time though, in which more and more legislators tend to get a blank check and do not have to face a major-party challenge – reportedly more than a third of all state legislators were running unopposed – already the challenge of an incumbent itself gets a symbolic meaning.

- ✚ New Mexico’s voters in Senate District 14 got to choose in the case of incumbent Senator James G. Taylor (D), who supported tax increases in the past and refused to sign the Taxpayer Protection Pledge. His challenger Fernando DeBaca (R) signed the Pledge, but lost by a margin of 37%-54.
- ✚ By the same token Rep. Kandy Cordova (D, H-7) voted for tax increases in the past and refused to sign the Taxpayer Protection Pledge. John E. Butterfield (R), a Pledge signer, challenged the incumbent Representative – albeit unsuccessfully. The tally was 54%-46% in Cordova’s favor.
- ✚ Deborah A. Torza (R), a Pledge signer challenged Rep. Harriet I. Ruiz (D, H-16) who refused to sign the Taxpayer Protection Pledge. Ruiz prevailed, the margin was 59%-41%. It is unclear how much of her victory may be owed to the legacy of her husband who had held the seat before he died of cancer.
- ✚ Rep. Thomas Swisstack (D, H-60), who refused to sign the Pledge, was challenged by Glenn Waters (R) who did sign the Pledge, thereby ruling out voting for future tax increases. Glenn Waters was able to close up on Swisstack, yet in the end the incumbent had the edge and won 51%-49%.
- ✚ However, not only possible allies for the Governor won. Rep. Eric Youngberg (R, H-23), a signer of the Pledge, faced a challenge by Janice Kando (D) who declined to sign the Taxpayer Protection Pledge. Youngberg successfully fended off the challenge at a margin of 54%-46.

## Oklahoma

- ✚ In Oklahoma’s House District 55 two candidates were vying for an open seat. John English (R) pledged to “oppose and vote against any and all efforts to increase taxes.” His opponent Ryan McMullen refused to make this commitment. Nonetheless Ryan McMullen was chosen by voters to represent them in the legislature by a very slim margin: 51%-49%.

## Oregon

- ✚ Rep. Linda Flores (R, H-51) fought against the \$800 million tax increase the legislature and Gov. Kulongoski passed in 2003, which was then defeated by vote of the people at the ballot box in 2004. Flores, a signer of the Taxpayer

Protection Pledge, was challenged by Kathryn Firestone (D). Firestone declined several offers to sign the Taxpayer Protection Pledge. Rep. Flores defeated her challenger 52%-48%.

- ✚ Senator Gary George (R, S-12) also fought against the 2003 tax increase. The fiscal conservative, who also signed the Taxpayer Protection Pledge, was challenged by Hank Franzoni, who not only refused to sign the Pledge, but, according to newspaper articles, vowed to re-pass portions of the 2003 tax hike if elected. Sen. George clearly defeated Franzoni by a margin of 58%-42%.

### South Carolina

- ✚ In a race for an open House seat in House District 78, Joan Brady (R), faced Todd Specter (D). While the former signed the Taxpayer Protection Pledge, Todd Specter declined numerous offers to do so. Joan Brady had defeated Susan Brill, who had refused to sign the Taxpayer Protection Pledge in a hotly contested primary-runoff in the summer. The newspaper *The State* had become involved here and had endorsed Brill over Brady, because Brill had not fallen into the trap of “letting others do her thinking” – referring to the commitment Brady had made to the taxpayers of her state. Brady defeated Specter 60%-40%.
- ✚ In House District 32, Rep. Doug Smith (R), a fiscal conservative and Pledge signer, saw himself challenged by Alice Hatcher Henderson, who refused to sign the Taxpayer Protection Pledge. Smith prevailed at 66%-34%.
- ✚ Rep. Tracy Edge (R), representing the voters of South Carolina’s 104<sup>th</sup> House District, is a signer of the Taxpayer Protection Pledge. His challenger Charles Randall (D), declined numerous offers to sign the Taxpayer Protection Pledge. Rep. Edge was able to fend off the challenge by a clear margin of 63%-37%.

### Tennessee

- ✚ In Senate District 16, incumbent Sen. Larry Trail (D), a trial lawyer and big labor supporter who voted for an increase in the sales tax, lost to fiscal conservative challenger Jim Tracey (R). With 98 percent of precincts reporting, the tally was 52%-48%.
- ✚ State Rep. Diane Black (R) ousted Sen. JoAnn Graves (D, S-18), the Senate’s Speaker Pro Tem. Graves had voted for an increase in the state’s sales tax. The final result was 52%-48%.