



# NEWS

## AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

1920 L Street, NW • Suite 200 • Washington, DC 20036  
202.785.0266 • Fax 202.785.0261

WWW.ATR.ORG

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CONTACT: Paul Proski  
Yoon Kim  
202-785-0266

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## North Carolina Governor Named Enemy of the Taxpayer

*-- Gov. Mike Easley has raided taxpayers' wallets --*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – During his gubernatorial campaign, Mike Easley said that as governor of North Carolina, he would not raise taxes on his constituents. Yet, since he took office in January 2001, taxes have gone up steadily for the hard-working families of North Carolina.

Blaming the general economic downturn, Easley reneged on his campaign promise, and proposed a ‘temporary’ one percent sales tax increase. The budget he signed later included two tax increases: a half percent sales tax increase, and a half percent income tax increase for those in the highest personal income bracket. While a 2003 sunset for these taxes was built into the budget, it never materialized, and instead the taxes were extended until 2005 to fund for an extra spending spree.

**“Governor Easley has not been straight with his constituents. He broke his promise and raised taxes on hard working families in order to cater to the wishes of big spenders who called for more money,”** said Grover Norquist, President of Americans for Tax Reform in Washington, DC. **“This clearly makes him an enemy of the taxpayer.”**

Governor Easley’s opponent in this year’s gubernatorial election, former state Senator Patrick Ballantine, has signed the Taxpayer Protection Pledge, a written commitment to oppose and vote against, and in the case of the gubernatorial office, veto any and all efforts to increase taxes. Gov. Easley has not signed the Pledge, indicating that he may raise taxes in the future.

**“Recent experience across the nation has shown taxpayers do not appreciate having their wallets raided. They expect government to live within its means, just like every ordinary family has to. When given the opportunity, taxpayers reject tax increases by large margins.”** Norquist continued. **“North Carolinians deserve a governor who sides with them and commits to defend taxpayers interests – and keeps his word. Gov. Easley clearly is not that someone.”**

*Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact Chris Butler at (202) 785-0266 or by email at [cbutler@atr.org](mailto:cbutler@atr.org).*