



Electoral races in which taxes played a dominant role

Federal

Nebraska – State Sen. Curt Bromm, Speaker of the Unicameral, was the leading candidate to replace retiring Congressman Doug Bereuter (R-1). But Sen. Bromm had pushed several tax increases through the Unicameral over a veto by Gov. Johanns. And Bromm refused to sign the Pledge, claiming he wanted to remain “flexible.”

Jeff Fortenberry, a Lincoln City Councilman and Pledge signer, won the primary on the tax issue, backed by Club for Growth among others.\

Oregon – State Sen. Jackie Winters, a rising star African American who was thought to be headed for national greatness, voted for the billion tax hike passed in the dead of night in the fall of 2003, only to be repealed by the people of Oregon by a 60-40% vote last February.

Jim Zupancic, an attorney who had served in no political office besides school board, won the nomination by signing the Pledge making taxes the number one issue.

Pennsylvania – Ellen Bard was the leading candidate to fill the open 13th district Congressional seat. But she refused to sign the Pledge, and in fact said she would support repealing the Bush tax cuts for higher income earners. She lost the primary to Pledge signer Melissa Brown.

State

Arizona – Five state tax-and-spend Republican legislators were defeated in the primary, and one retired. In addition, one anti-tax Senator held his seat against a teachers union-backed challenger.

14 GOP representatives teamed up with the Democrats to pass a big-spending budget for 2004/05. Of those 14, four – Hanson, Jayne, Hubbs, and Arnold – were defeated.

In the Senate, Sen. Slade Mead and Sen. Linda Binder tied up legislative business to push for higher spending. Sen. Mead even proposed a series of tax hikes totaling a billion dollars. Sen. Mead was challenged in his primary by state Rep. John Huppenthal, a

Pledge signer with a spotless record on taxes. Huppenthal defeated Mead by a margin of 63-37%.

Sen. Binder retired rather than face the voters again. State Rep. Bill Wagner sought the open seat, but he had sponsored the only tax increase package in the House this year. Conservative anti-taxer Ron Gould defeated Wagner in the primary.

Finally, Sen. Jack Harper is a Pledge signer who is good on taxes. He was challenged from the left by a teachers union backed lady named Susan Burke. But Sen. Harper held his seat by a 61-39% margin.

South Carolina – (More to come)

In a closely watched run-off race for an open House seat, Susan Brill refused to sign the Pledge, claiming she wanted to retain “flexibility.” Local power brokers sided with her and against the Pledge, including *The State* newspaper, South Carolina’s largest. The newspaper ran a campaign to demonize the Pledge and those who take it, making taxes the dominant issue. Yet Brill’s Pledge signing, anti-tax opponent, Joan Brady, won a close race on the tax issue.

Georgia – One pro-tax senator defeated, and one open seat won on the tax issue.

In 2003, Gov. Sonny Perdue became the first Republican governor of Georgia since Reconstruction. But shortly after taking office, Gov. Perdue proposes 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 Sen. Joey Brush. He was a Pledge signer who broke the Pledge by voting for Perdue’s tax increases. Pledge signer Jim Whitehead challenged Sen. Brush, making the tax vote a centerpiece of his campaign. Sen. Brush was defeated.

In a run-off for the 37th Senate district seat, John Wiles signed the Pledge, and his opponent Lance Cooper refused to sign the Pledge. Taxes thus became a major issue, and Pledge signer John Wiles won the nomination.

Kansas – (need more info)

In the Kansas Senate, Finance Committee Chairman Dave Corbin backed several tax increases, including income, sales, property, and internet taxes. He was challenged by former Rep. Peggy Palmer, a Pledge signer with a good record on taxes. Sen. Corbin lost in a landslide.

Sen. Kay O’Connor, a Pledge signer with a good anti-tax record, survived a well-funded challenge by pro-tax state Rep. Rob Boyer.

In the House, Rep. Cindy Neighbor was a co-sponsor of the failed income, sales, and property tax increase proposal last spring. She was challenged by Pledge signer former Rep. Mary Pilcher Cook. Rep. Neighbor lost roughly 54-46%.

Rep. Bill Kassebaum, another sponsor of the income, sales, and property tax proposal, lost to an anti-tax challenger.

North Carolina – At least four pro-tax representatives defeated.

In 2002, a close election left the NC House split 61-59 Republican. Moderates, led by Rep. Richard Morgan, refused to back the GOP nominee for Speaker, and Republican Rep. Decker switched parties to make the split 60-60. Rep. Morgan cut a deal with Democrats to share power under a co-speakership, and a large tax increase was passed under their joint rule. Conservative Republicans challenged at least 11 of the turncoat Republicans.

At least four moderates, including the party switcher, lost to conservative, anti-tax challengers. (Waiting for more info)

Nevada – waiting for more info

State Sen. Ray Rawson voted for Gov. Kenny Guinn (R)'s \$833 million tax hike in 2003. He was challenged by Pledge signer state Rep. Bob Beers. Sen. Rawson lost 56-44%.

Oregon – Two resigned and took state jobs, one retired, and one defeated.

State Rep. Vic Backlund voted for the surprise billion dollar tax increase that was repealed by the voters by a 60-40% margin only four months after it was passed. The local newspapers cited Backlund as the “deciding vote” that passed the tax increase. Political unknown Kim Thatcher challenged him based on the tax issue, and Rep. Backlund lost.

State Rep. Lane Shetterly and Rep. Max Williams were both appointed to state jobs by the Democrat governor – an apparent payoff to legislators who voted against their districts and feared the voters.

Finally, Rep. Rob Patridge – the third of the trio (including Shetterly and Williams) that negotiated for GOP support, decided not to seek re-election.