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CONTACT: John Kartch
Eric Schmidt

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202-785-0266

Georgia Misses Opportunity for Tax Relief

State Legislature Fails to Pass 2008 Property Tax Reform Plan

Washington, D.C. – Recently Georgia’s state legislature failed to pass SR 796, also known as the 2008 Property Tax Reform plan. The resolution would have included one of the largest tax cuts in Georgia’s history, and would have made significant reforms to the property tax code that many Georgians have been decrying.

The house version of the resolution received a positive response on March 5th, with a vote of 110-62, falling just 10 votes short of the required two thirds majority needed for a constitutional amendment. Included in the bill were ad valorem tax reductions that would have eliminated a car tag tax and caps on local revenue that limited future property tax increases. House Speaker Glenn Richardson led efforts to get the resolution passed, but in the end came up just short.

“By not passing SR 796 Georgia has missed a rare opportunity to enact true property tax reform,” said Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. **“Though this tax reform plan went through several iterations, the final form championed by Speaker Richardson and other fiscal conservatives would have been a clear victory for Georgia taxpayers.”**

The bill would have saved taxpayers nearly 700 million dollars annually. Most of the money would be saved in the elimination of the commonly called “birthday tax”, which currently requires that Georgians pay a car tag tax every year on their birthday. The plan also called for the limitation of assessed values of both residential and non-residential property, effectively warding off any future “back-door” property tax increases.

“When taxpayers get to keep more of their own money, it leaves room for the economy to grow and expand,” continued Grover Norquist. **“This bill not only would have kept the government from annually running taxpayer’s birthdays, but kept them out of their checkbooks as well.”**

Americans for Tax Reform (ATR) is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all federal, state and local tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact John Kartch at (202) 785-0266 or at jkartch@atr.org.

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