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## California Legislature Passes Tax Hike Free Budget *Taxpayer Protection Pledge Signers Hold the Line Against Tax Increases*

WASHINGTON D.C.– Shortly after 2 a.m. this morning the legislature passed a budget plan, easily garnering the necessary two-thirds majority in both chambers. The budget agreement concludes the longest and most protracted budget standoff in the legislature's history.

The initial budget proposal brought forth by Democrats in July represented nearly \$9 billion in tax hikes on income and employers. By August, Gov. Schwarzenegger and Democrat legislators were pushing for a multi-billion dollar sales tax increase that would have raised the rate by 14 percent in a state that already has the highest sales tax in the country. These proposals were repeatedly met with staunch opposition from Republicans who contend that the state does not have a revenue problem, it has a spending problem.

“Democrat legislators and the tax-dependent special interests that descend upon Sacramento every year act like a teenage boy on a prom date. Just like the boy's date, California taxpayers and those protecting their wallets in Sacramento must continuously say ‘NO’ to the same question being asked a million different ways,” said Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. “I applaud Republican legislators in California for their unwavering defense of taxpayers. What's more, in the face of unrelenting pressure from the governor, Democrats, and the media, they upheld a promise to their constituents to oppose any and all efforts to increase taxes.

The budget agreement now awaits Gov. Schwarzenegger's signature. If vetoed, a two-thirds majority vote in the legislature will be needed to override. September 30 is the deadline for passed legislation to be signed into law by the governor.

“California legislators can end this yearly budget showdown by simply putting all state expenditures online and in a searchable format, just as 11 other states have done or are in the process of doing. Only then will we be able to have an honest and educated discussion about how to best prioritize spending and trim fat from the budget. What's more, taxpayers have the right to know where their money goes.” added Grover Norquist. “One thing is certain, this drawn out budget battle made clear who is looking out for the interests of Golden State taxpayers.

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 John Kartch at (202) 785-0266 or by email at [jkartch@atr.org](mailto:jkartch@atr.org)

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