



NEWS

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North Dakota Legislators: Kill The Death Tax

Legislators pass second resolution directing the state's senators not to obstruct the president's tax cut agenda

WASHINGTON – Two weeks ago, the North Dakota state Assembly passed a resolution by a voice vote calling on their members of Congress to pass President Bush's Economic Growth and Jobs tax cut package. Building upon that action, the North Dakota House has now passed another resolution, (sponsored by Republican Rep. Al Carlson) by a vote of 59-33, calling on the state's members of Congress to permanently repeal the "Death Tax." President Bush's historic 2001 tax relief plan repealed this onerous tax, but due to obscure congressional rules, the tax will come back in full force in 2011.

Over the next eight years, the estate tax, more commonly known as the Death Tax, will phase out. But in 2011, the tax will return at the same level it was in 2001. At the local level, state legislatures across the nation have become increasingly vocal on the subject, making their congressional delegations aware of their stance on the Death Tax. Since January, 19 state legislative bodies have introduced resolutions calling on their congressional delegation to repeal the death tax permanently.

"The Death Tax is the worst kind of double taxation," said taxpayer advocate Grover Norquist, who heads the Washington-based Americans for Tax Reform (ATR). **"You work your whole life, pay taxes on your earnings, pay sales taxes on the things you buy, and once you die, Big Brother Government steps in to take up to another 50 percent."**

In 2002, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill to permanently repeal the death tax, by a vote of 256 to 171. However, the Senate resisted the motion and, in June of 2002, voted to permanently repeal the Death Tax by a 54 to 44 margin, but did not achieve the necessary 3/5 vote required to wave the Congressional Budget Act with regard to Gramm Amendment 3833. North Dakota Sens. Byron Dorgan (D) and Kent Conrad (D) both voted against the repeal of the Death Tax.

"As Senators Dorgan and Conrad continue to obstruct on tax cuts, their state legislators continue to demonstrate how out of step the senators are with their constituents," continued Norquist. **"The Death Tax is just two votes away in the United States Senate from being permanently repealed for good. Dorgan and Conrad could provide the needed votes to finally put this tax to rest. Conversely, their obstruction will further lead to the destruction of small businesses and family farms."**

It is estimated that more than 70 percent of family businesses do not survive the second generation and 87 percent do not survive the third generation, mostly due to the Death Tax.

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 Jonathan Collegio at (202) 785-0266 or by email at jcollegio@atr.org.