



# NEWS

## AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

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## Nevada Legislators Hold Off Gov's Tax Hikes

*Friends of taxpayers in Nevada House stave off \$860 million of tax hikes in state budget.*

WASHINGTON – The battle between taxpayers and state spending lobbies in Nevada progressed through another round Monday, as a group of state legislators committed to no tax increases held off \$860 million in proposed tax increases for the state budget.

The Nevada Senate and Assembly could not come to agreement on the \$5 billion spending plan for 2003-2005, after it became apparent that tax hikes were mixed into the blueprint.

**“Nevada taxpayers won another round in their battle against Gov. Guinn, but the fight’s not over yet,”** said taxpayer advocate Grover Norquist, who heads Americans for Tax Reform (ATR) in Washington. **“Gov. Guinn’s plan to tax Nevada businesses puts the state’s reputation as a business friendly state in great harm,”** he continued. ATR is widely considered the nation’s leading taxpayer advocacy organization, with affiliates in over 40 states across the nation.

The \$869 million tax increase over two years, prepared by Senate Majority Leader Bill Raggio (R-Reno) and Assembly Speaker Richard Perkins (D-Henderson) and backed by Gov. Guinn was blocked by a group of assemblymen who had signed ATR’s Taxpayer Protection Pledge, a written promise to their constituents to “oppose and vote against any and all efforts to increase taxes.”

The bill failed in the House with 27 votes for and 15 against on Monday night. Tax hikes in Nevada must also have two-thirds support in both houses of the legislature to achieve passage. Twenty-eight votes are necessary to gain passage in the Assembly. Fifteen of 19 Assembly Republicans voted against the tax hike.

**“More than forty states across the country have budget problems, but these are due to overspending, not overtaxing,”** said Norquist. **“It’s a problem caused by legislators and bureaucrats who, in the late 1990s, saw fields of surpluses due to the hot economy and thought they could reap those revenues for ages. Of course, the fields of plenty dried up and now the folks in Carson City want to pass the bill along to taxpayers and businesses across the state. This is awful, irresponsible policy,”** he continued. **“Nevada’s economy and reputation as a business-friendly state are at risk.”**

The tax increases come after state lobbying organizations, including the National Governor’s Association (NGA) lobbied hard at the federal level for a federal “bailout” of \$20 billion toward state overspending. **“Even with the federal money they still want to mug the taxpayers,”** concluded Norquist.

*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](mailto:jcollegio@atr.org).*