



NEWS

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Victory in South Carolina!

Gov. Sanford and legislature agree to plan to balance the budget WITHOUT raising taxes.

WASHINGTON – After intense wrangling for the past five months over how to balance the state budget, meet the rising cost of Medicaid for the poor, and reform the tax code, lawmakers and Governor Mark Sanford (R) came to the best possible conclusion – a balanced budget that avoids tax hike, fully funds priority programs, and leaves the path open for fundamental tax reform next year.

Led by House Speaker David Wilkins (R-Greenville) and House Majority Leader Rick Quinn (R-Richland), the legislature worked with the governor to use spending restraint and federal aid to hold the line on taxes. As a result, the state will be on solid ground to tackle Gov. Sanford's tax reform priorities next year.

“I want to thank Governor Sanford and the whole legislature for their fine work this year,” said taxpayer advocate Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. **“Early on in the debate, some appeared ready to take the easy way out and soak hard-working families to fund on-going waste. But South Carolina’s leaders refused to give up. And the result is a balanced budget that does not ask for more sacrifice from the state’s taxpayers.”**

Like most other states, South Carolina faced a budget dilemma this year. Rapid revenue growth during the boom years of the late 1990's led to reckless spending growth many times the rate of inflation. When the inevitable economic slowdown came, it revealed how unsustainable such spending levels were. Almost every state was urged to raise taxes in response, but South Carolina chose to join states such as Florida, Colorado, and Texas in balancing the budget using spending restraint.

“Governor Sanford and the legislature have avoided placing further burdens on South Carolina’s hard-working families, and have set the stage for the state’s future prosperity,” Norquist continued. **“I look forward to working with the governor next year to help him pass needed tax reform.”**

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.