



NEWS

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Tough Luck for Tom Strickland, as Taxes Become the Defining Issue in Colorado Senate Race

With election day just two weeks away, taxes increasingly seen as dividing point between candidates.

WASHINGTON — Whenever election day draws near, there are some issues that some candidates would not even touch with a ten-foot cattleprod. And in Tom Strickland's (D) bid to become U.S. Senator from Colorado, that issue is taxes.

Strickland has shied away. The major tax debate in the last session of Congress centered around making permanent the tax relief plan signed into law by President Bush in June of 2001. Strickland's opponent, Sen. Wayne Allard (R) voted for the plan and supports making it permanent. On the record, Strickland supports only making "parts" of the plan permanent.

"Taxes are the single most visible and important public policy issue for hard working Americans," said taxpayer advocate Grover Norquist, who heads Americans for Tax Reform (ATR) in Washington, **"and Tom Strickland must make his views on this issue absolutely clear to Colorado voters before the election. Will he vote to make tax relief permanent or not?"**

Due to obscure Senate rules, the entire tax plan, which includes broad rate reductions and a phase out of the Marriage Penalty and Death Tax, will expire on 31 December 2010. The following day, tax rates will jump to pre-tax cut levels, amounting to one of the largest tax increases in American history. The Republican-controlled U.S. House voted to make all parts of the plan permanent last spring, but Democratic leaders in the Senate, who control the body by one vote, refused to bring the bill up for a vote.

Apart from supporting tax relief, Allard scored a perfect 100% on ATR's congressional scorecard, which tracks congressional voting records on important, tax-related votes. **Allard has also signed ATR's Taxpayer Protection Pledge, which is a written promise from elected officials to voters to oppose and vote against efforts to increase taxes. Strickland has repeatedly refused to sign the Pledge.**

"Strickland is afraid to talk about taxes because once he clarifies his position on tax relief he'll lose the votes of Coloradans who oppose tax hikes," continued Norquist. **"When Strickland wants to make friends with taxpayers, he'll sign the 'no new taxes' pledge."**

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