



The Activist News

Citizens for Limited Taxation

The Commonwealth Activist Network

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The Massachusetts Taxpayer Activist's Newsletter

□ June 2003

Bill to kill the initiative petition process on life support itself

We may have won one, at least for now, with a “take no prisoners” strategy

Senator Stan Rosenberg (D-Amherst) filed a bill to change the initiative petition process: increasing the number of signatures required, creating a new county distribution requirement, and giving political appointees the power to write the ballot titles and summaries. CLT chose not to debate the fine points, but to attack with intent to destroy, and we made this clear at the public hearing on April 10th.

We found support from our Coalition for Legislative Reform allies Common Cause and MassPirg, and other groups who use

the initiative process like Grey2KUSA and Mass. Voters for Clean Elections, and from Secretary of State William Galvin and Peter Saks from the AG's office, who write the ballot titles and the summaries. (Despite what legislative opponents like to say, CLT does play well with others when it serves our cause).

The Committee on Election Laws gave the bill an “unfavorable” report, which gives us a good chance for a “no” vote in the next constitutional convention if Rosenberg keeps trying.

**“You wouldn't mind the nickels and dimes
if we weren't paying so much in dollar denominations.”**

Barbara Anderson, as quoted in the Boston Globe (City edition), May 25

While spending interests continue to argue for an increase in the income tax rate to 5.6 percent or 5.95 percent, or “a penny on the sales tax,” i.e., a 20 percent hike, they face Gov. Romney's veto, legislative leadership's concern for its members, and a public that so far is not buying the “need” for “new revenues” despite millions of dollars in radio and TV advertising by the Mass. Teachers and the Mass. Municipal Associations.

CLT cannot match their money, but we are winning the issue with quotes in the free media, personal appearances on radio and TV, op-ed columns, and the CLT website which has become a major source of information for those dealing with the state budget.

As of this writing, there are fees in the Senate budget that are really taxes, i.e., that give no special service to the payer and/or which go into the general fund of the commonwealth (eg., Senate taxes on homeowner insurance premiums and firearm registration, Romney's proposal to expand the bottle bill tax). There is no end to the things that can be “fee'd” under the new definition that was created by Jane Swift's tax on self-payer nursing home beds and the Legislature's pharmacy prescription tax.

Gov. Romney has suggested he might veto the homeowner insurance tax; if his veto is overridden, this might be the case we were looking for to go to court and get a clear definition of “fee vs. tax.”

Activists Alert!

In the early '90s, when Speaker Tom Finneran was House Ways & Means Chairman, he tried several times to exclude local overlay accounts (money for possible abatements) from Proposition 2½. CLT was able to defeat him either directly or by encouraging Governor Weld to veto this bill, which would have effectively changed Prop 2½ to Prop 4½, on average. Property taxes would

increase, without an override, the amount that each community is required by its abatement history to set aside each year. The Overlay exclusion showed up this year several times on the list of possible new taxes, so we are watching to make sure it isn't offered as a way to offset local aid cuts.

CLT Voluntary Tax Update

CLT proposed a voluntary income tax check-off soon after winning the 2000 tax rollback ballot question. Our bill was adopted by the Legislature, became law, and appeared for the first time on this year's income tax returns.

As of May 23, 1042 tax filers out of 2,056,000 chose to take

advantage of our offer to pay the higher 5.8 percent income tax rate instead of the 5.3 percent to which it had been rolled back for tax year 2002. This gave the state an extra \$122,846 to spend on whatever. But where are all the others who campaigned and voted against the rollback in 2000?



Beacon Hill Happens

Excerpts from Chip Ford's Updates to CLT e-mail activists

April 22 – Nationally “Tax Freedom Day” in 2003 was celebrated on April 19th. That’s the day when taxpayers start working for themselves after paying off the year’s tax burden. Unfortunately, in Massachusetts it doesn’t arrive until May 2, two weeks later than the national average, and that’s after the Tax Foundation factored in last year’s income tax rollback, from 5.6 to 5.3 percent. According to the Tax Foundation’s annual report, Massachusetts had the second-heaviest total tax burden of any state in the nation, led only by Connecticut.

Without our rollback last year, we could have been Number One!

May 5 – Just when we thought it was safe to go back in the water ... a dark new tax hike plot is circling just beneath the surface.

It would appear to be a spin-off of last year’s ploy, the one we’ve so far dodged this year. The one that goes like, “first ‘the sky will fall’ because we’re pulling it down; but before it does we rush in and save the day by raising taxes!”

This year, tax-and-spend Democrats in the Legislature apparently intend to pull down the sky, then, when the public begins feeling crushed by the pols’ perverted priorities, race back to save the day by raising taxes.

“Don’t worry, we’re in the second inning of a nine-inning game,” Finneran coyly advised his tax-and-spend crowd. Before

we reach the seventh-inning stretch they’ll have ratcheted up needless pain to excruciation.

Fire and police – public safety that we all expect government to provide in exchange for so much of our hard-earned money — are once again the first on the chopping block. Care of the *truly* needy will also be at the top of their list, and keep dodging those potholes in the roads because your “dedicated” highway taxes and fees are being spent elsewhere. Everything we expect from even a minimalist government will be choice targets for sacrifice on Beacon Hill’s sacred altar of business-as-usual.

CLT News Release, May 23

The Senate Ways & Means Committee budget is impressive in many ways, and an improvement over the House effort. Unless we are missing something, we find better priorities, more reform, less cuts in direct services, and no increases in income, sales or property taxes.

Unfortunately the overall effect is spoiled by outrageous new taxes that call themselves fees without even trying to fit the legal definition. Legitimate fees are better than taxes, though it is hard to support even legitimate new fees on top of the 5th highest per capita tax burden in the country.

... and local government happens too!

CLT’s override manual is lucky charm

Four “how to fight an override” manuals mailed out this spring and four victories for the taxpayers! While we can’t guarantee that you will win with this helpmate, the manual does give simple commonsense advice on how to fight an override, and includes samples of flyers, hand-outs and newspaper ads that have been successfully used by other groups.

If you are a CLT member, have an override scheduled in your community, and want to actively fight it, contact Chip Faulkner at 508-384-0100 and he’ll send you the manual.

Plymouth - On April 14th CLT Associate Director Chip Faulkner gave a speech to a Plymouth taxpayer group with the excellent name HALT (Homeowners Alliance for Lower Taxation), then sent a manual to CLT member and HALT President Frank Paoluccio, who later thanked Chip for his assistance when the

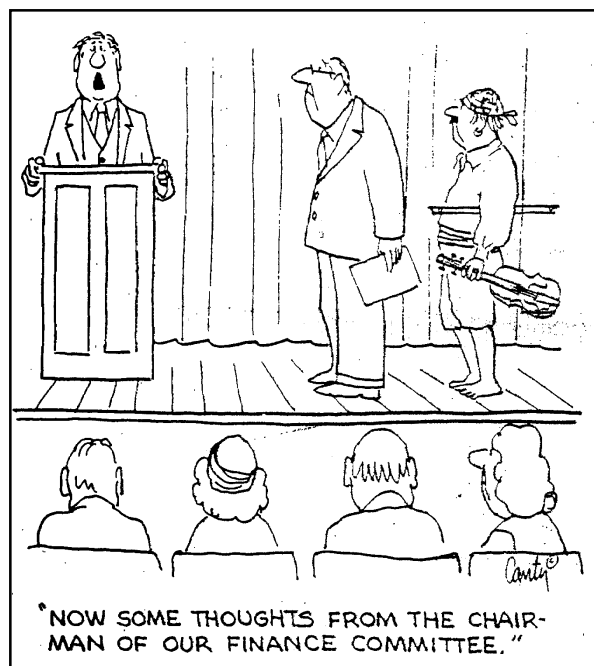
override was defeated by over 1000 votes.

Chelmsford - CLT activist Kathy Hestand in Chelmsford sent Chip a note thanking him for the manual after an override was defeated there by over 1200 votes.

Hopkinton - Longtime CLT activist Pat Neumann gave the samples of anti-override literature in the manual to CLT member Vascen Bogigian, who created a one-page newspaper ad that was clearly a decisive factor in the override’s 379 vote defeat.

Saugus - CLT member Terri Lehane requested the manual, and Saugus rejected two override questions by 2-1 margins.

As of this writing, it is impossible to determine the win/loss record on overrides for this year, since a) they are still happening and b) while “passes”



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Excerpts from Barbara's recent columns

Excerpts from columns by Barbara Anderson which appear weekly in the Salem News and the Lowell Sun, biweekly in South of Boston's Tinytown Gazette. The columns also appear in their entirety on our website at www.cltg.org.

January

Blessed are they who tax the sick? Some citizens called their local senators and reps late last year about this new TAX on pharmacies, as well as the proposed cuts in Medicaid reimbursements to the pharmacies and the tax on nursing home beds, only to be told that they hadn't known what they were voting on. That kind of communication is always such a defining moment between the governing and the governed. Constituents who actually heard that phrase from the mouth of the horses' behinds can now appreciate more fully why some House members believe they should get a payraise this year.

February

If. It's time to get state spending under control. Governor Romney made a good start with his television address. He must continue to heed the words of Rudyard Kipling and keep his head, even when all about him begin losing theirs and blaming it on him.

SUV tax. Some of us drive SUVs but are otherwise environmentally friendly; those who do better than we on the overall scale can complain about our car but the others should mind their own business.

But where would you cut? It is not, under any circumstances, the job of the taxpayers to suggest budget cuts before they can resist being taxed more. We taxpayers provide the money that provides all state services; we've done our job. Someone say "thank you" instead of suggesting we leave our jobs and our families to become state budget analysts and auditors. That's what we pay our representatives, administration officials, and state auditor to do.

On Feb. 17th birthday. My politics aren't about to change. If anything, rather than mellowing, I've curmudgeoned: life is too darn short to put up with this nonsense.

My gosh, there's three billion dollars missing! The Romney budget's bottom line, despite what opponents imply, is not three billion dollars less than the present budget but close to what is being spent this year. The so-called "budget gap" is the gap between available state revenues and what the state agencies want to spend. If you talk with advocates who always focus on "unmet needs," the "budget gap" could be a trillion dollars!

March

Taxes vs. fees. "Tax. A charge imposed by governmental authority to raise money for public purposes... Fee. A charge fixed by law for the services of a public officer or for licenses, registrations, permits; a sum paid for a privilege." *The Living Webster*

The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court clarified the difference in "Emerson College vs. the City of Boston" in 1984, when Boston tried to charge businesses a fire protection "fee" that other property taxpayers did not have to pay on top of their property taxes. In ruling for Emerson, the ruling said that fees are charged for particular governmental services which benefit the parties paying the fees in a manner "not shared by other members of society," are paid by choice in that one can forego the service and avoid the charge, and are collected not to raise revenues but to compensate the governmental entity for providing the service.

Environmentalism Romney wants to expand the bottle bill to fruit juice?

The original bottle bill was intended to encourage people to return their soft drink cans so they could recoup their nickel deposit. But in the years of a strong economy, a lot of people apparently didn't need the nickel, and left it at the store, which returned it to the state. This found money is called the "escheat." Spending this windfall quickly became a state habit. Last year it amounted to over \$30 million dollars. That's over 600 million bottles that didn't get returned to the store! It's a wonder we can even see the hallowed Massachusetts ground under all those discarded bottles.

On Good and Evil. Perhaps by the end of the year, Saddam Hussein will be destroyed, the real child abusers in the clergy will be punished, and Gerry Amirault will be free. But the evil that was done by the first two, and to the latter, will remind us forever that evil often triumphs for the short term, and makes a permanent blot on our childlike sense of justice.

April

Who ARE these people? (At the State House hearing on revenues) Rep. Mark Falzone (D-Saugus) asked the so-called Mass. Taxpayers Foundation (MTF), Associated Industries of Massachusetts (AIM), and the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities (a liberal think-tank) where they get their funding.

MTF said it is "funded by employers across the commonwealth" – most of whom probably didn't know that their president, Michael Widmer, was going to recommend a 20% increase in the sales tax. AIM said that it funded by manufacturers, many of whom probably didn't know their vice-president was going to hint that raising the income tax might be the best thing to do. The liberal group didn't answer, and I wanted to know why Rep. Falzone didn't follow through and make it tell us.

Of pay and power. The payraises are bad enough. When voters passed the 1998 constitutional amendment that automatically adjusts legislators pay relative to state income, they were told that this would prevent their representatives from voting to raise

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Excerpts, cont'd ...

their own pay, as they had in the past. Now these reps get the automatic raise, vote themselves higher expense payments, and wait on one knee for the Speaker to make them a “bonus pay leader.” When they achieve that status, they lower the other knee. Not a pretty sight.

Beware the taxpayers bearing gifts. When I first became the spokesperson for the Proposition 2½ campaign in 1980, a Boston Globe columnist referred to Prop 2½ as “a Trojan horse.” With my drama/history background, I could immediately fire off a letter to the editor proclaiming that “whether the Trojan horse was a good or a bad thing depends entirely upon whether one is a Greek or a Trojan.”

My point was clear. The politicians occupied the home turf, the high ground of Beacon Hill; taxpayer activists, outnumbered by hordes of spending advocates, needed an outsiders’ strategy to win. The initiative petition process took us inside the gates of power and gave us our property tax limit. Let’s hear it for the wooden horse!

May

Let them eat cake. We might as well face the fact that old thrifty Yankee town meeting is dead in most communities; what is left is the joy of spending other people’s money. Thank heavens for Proposition 2½; at least we get a chance to say No.

One smug young woman, talking about this year’s override, stated that people who can’t afford the money have a bigger problem handling their finances than town meeting could address. Isn’t that special? I hope Marblehead-ers realize that the new override would join the last school override on their next tax bills, creating an average increase of \$279 on top of the present bills. If they can’t afford that, I suppose they should just leave town, or drop dead

It’s not funny! During the previous hour the nationally syndicated “Face the Nation,” featuring white-haired professional Bob Schiefer, was discussing the Bush tax cut. A guest insisted that money should instead be sent to the states, which are struggling with budget shortfalls. He listed cuts in police, fire, etc. etc. and then Governor Gray Davis of California “having to cut funds for prosthetic devices” for missing limbs; Bob Schiefer laughed out loud.

There was a moment of stunned silence, then an apparently embarrassed Schiefer apologized. But I knew exactly what had

happened. Having heard the litany many times over his career, he was waiting for the obligatory threat to the handicapped, and when it happened on cue, he laughed at his prescience.

Twenty-two years ago, I was invited, along with people of various political persuasions, to one of the local network stations to view coming ads against Proposition 2½. The first ad showed policemen, firemen, teachers, the elderly, all being “harmed” by the property tax limit. Out loud I asked, “where is the handicapped freckle-faced kid?” and on cue, there he was, freckles and all, wearing a neck brace. Some people laughed then too.

Memorial Day. Maybe that’s why Memorial Day is in spring-time. We have to be overwhelmed by spring happiness to really appreciate those who died to make it possible. They don’t get to smell the lilacs, fire up the grill, take their kids and grandkids to the ballgame. They missed so many picnics, beach days, graduations, June weddings; they missed so much of the life that most of us get to enjoy for years.



Jerry Williams and Chip Ford host a 1986 news conference the day after leading a successful repeal of the mandatory seat belt law. Jerry drew Chip into his first act of political activism. Jerry passed away on April 29 at age 79.

May 18 column by Barbara and Chip Ford, the Springfield Republican (with later versions published in the Boston Globe and the Providence Journal). Common sense tells us that the dramatic annual spending increases of the ‘90s are not sustainable during a cyclical economic downturn, and taxes cannot be hiked a billion dollars every year into the future without permanently harming the state’s economy and taxpayers.

We working people have been doing our part. Massachusetts’ per capita tax burden – the amount paid by every man, woman and child in the commonwealth – is 5th

highest in the nation; state spending is, correspondingly, 6th highest. Per-pupil spending, K-12, is also 5th highest in the country, 24 percent above the national average.

You will sometimes hear the statistic that Massachusetts ranks 45th in the nation in the share of personal income directed to state and local spending. This is because our commonwealth has a lot of wealthy people who can afford higher taxes. The statistic has nothing to do with the rest of us who cannot...

As we say “no” to new taxes we are saying “yes” to more responsive, effective, accountable state and local government. At least it’s worth a try.



CLT tribute to David Wilson, who died in May

Our sympathy to Dave's wife Lucie, also a CLT activist. We'll miss him too.

From Chip Faulkner, CLT's 2½ PAC Director

Dave Wilson was the best judge of political talent that I've known in 20 years of running a PAC. Dave would get background information on someone running for office and then meet with the candidate for about an hour. Dave would then tell you if this person had a chance of getting elected and what the approximate vote totals would be. Four of five times he'd be right on the money. Dave was a delight to work with during election season. In the middle of hours of mapping out campaign plans he would suddenly make hilarious political jokes and observations that had everyone in hysterics. It was his way of showing that although he took Mass. politics seriously he also recognized the absurdity of it all. Political talents like Dave Wilson come along rarely and made politics far more enjoyable for those who had the good fortune to work with him.

From Barbara Anderson

When Proposition 2½ limited property taxes, Dave joined Citizens for Limited Taxation to protect and preserve it. He served on its Board of Directors, ran its polit-

ical action committee, and received its highest political activist award with an introduction that compared him to "the gunfighter whose tomb on Boot Hill bears the inscription, 'he done his damndest'"

This certainly applied to his other taxpayer challenge. When the Republican Party was on its deathbed in Massachusetts, he founded the Plymouth County Republican Club and brought it back to life, supporting President Ronald Reagan nationally, running several local candidates for the state Legislature who actually won seats, and helping to elect Republican governors who turned around the commonwealth's economy in the '90s.

When he wasn't politicking or opposing local Prop 2½ overrides he was prankstering: sending Christmas cards with savage-looking, "bunny-eating" eagles instead of jolly Santas, hosting spud-gun battles down at his cottage on Long Lake in Plymouth, dumping people like me from a canoe while playing Hiawatha. Once I received an envelope containing a disgusting red/yellow smear of goop; Dave wrote that it was his DNA and he wanted me to have him cloned.

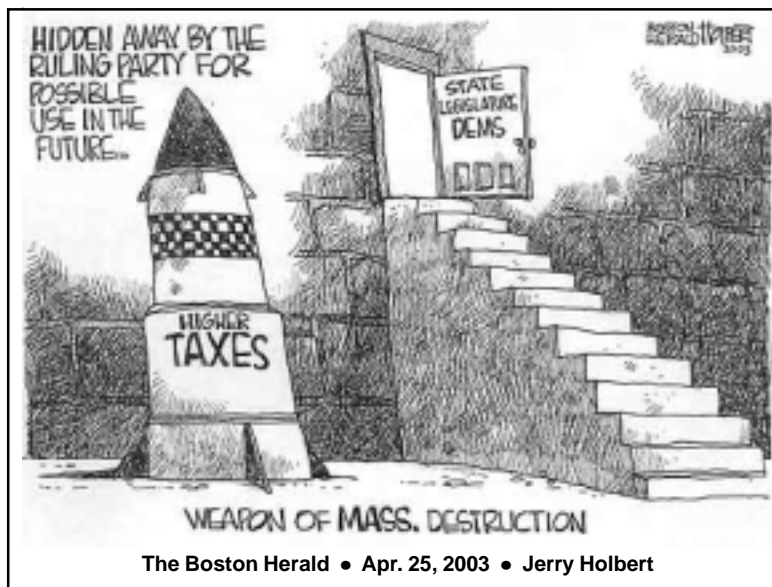


Plymouth County activist Dave Wilson protecting his birdseed with his right to bear arms.

Gee, I wish I had.

"Finneran comforted at least two disconsolate health and human service advocates at the State House with the same cryptic message: 'Don't worry, we're in the second inning of a nine-inning game.'"

The Boston Globe, May 5



Sore losers ... and some who get it

“Someone has to explain to these people” says Chip Ford of Citizens for Limited Taxation, “an override is an election, not negotiations.”

The Boston Herald, May 25, “Tax-and-spenders fight dirty, lose sore,” by Howie Carr

Selectmen Chairwoman Martha Swindell was in tears last night after the totals came in.

“I’ll be blunt,” she said. “The voters made a big mistake and I’m not sure why.”

Salem News, May 7, Danvers says No: Voters reject \$25.8 million request to repair, renovate town schools

“I’m not surprised,” school committee member Jane Freedman said. “Plymouth has a history of not supporting school building projects. I was hoping ... a concern for education would override people’s concern for their economic condition, but that wasn’t the case.”

Patriot Ledger, May 12, Plymouth voters reject override

John Kilbourne, a member of Support Plymouth’s Future, which supported a ‘yes’ vote on Question 2, said voters were misinformed by members of the Homeowner’s Alliance For Lower Taxation (HALT), which campaigned for a ‘no’ vote.

“(HALT) simply lied to the residents of Plymouth,” Kilbourne said. “They spread fear and uncertainty that in a civilized society should be illegal.”

Kilbourne also said voter turnout was low, and that parents of school children did not cast ballots.

*Old Colony Memorial, May 14,
School plan fails, losers want to try again*

“Now we are looking forward to the people who voted no to come forward with creative solutions to the town’s budget crisis,” said Suzanne Choumitsky, co-chairman of the “Yes for Randolph

Committee”.

“I’m looking forward to see how they solve \$5.2 million worth of problems without \$5.2 million,” she said. “I think people don’t want to pay more taxes. They don’t trust government and they don’t want to pay for it.”

*Patriot Ledger, May 14,
Randolph voters in no mood for overrides*

“We’re hugely disappointed,” said Joseph Hubbard, who was active in the pro-override group Save Braintree. But, he said, there is an “underlying feeling in town that there is a tremendous amount of waste in town government.”

Patriot Ledger, May 14, 2 Braintree requests rejected

“We are very disappointed in the outcome of the ballot vote for our children and young people,” School Committee Chairman Nancy Morse read from a prepared statement after the vote was announced. “It is a devastating loss for our School Committee.”

Yet voters leaving the polls yesterday used adjectives like “ridiculous,” “flagrant” and “outrageous” to describe the proposed override.

Salem News, May 16, Hamilton voters reject school override

“I thought Hopkinton was worth it. I guess it’s not,” said the Citizens Information Task Force member who has been pushing for the measure. “You want the cuts, have them. Cut teachers, cut fire, cut police.”

MetroWest Daily News, May 20, Hopkinton rejects override

Councilor Debra A. Botellio is against a tax hike.

“We have other options that we need to look at,” said Botellio. “I think it’s totally unfair to put any extra burden on the taxpayers now. People are going through hard times, and we have to find the funds elsewhere.”

*Brockton Enterprise, May 15,
Tax increase idea receiving cool reception in Taunton*

Proposition 2½ overrides could cost the average Pembroke homeowner more than \$700 a year, a report from the town treasurer indicates.

When town department heads meet today, they will read a report from the town treasurer who calculates that the average taxpayer will be paying an additional \$810.12 a year to cover the cost of school construction and the \$1.7 million override on June 21 at a special election, if passed by the voters....

[Chief Assessor-Appraiser Maureen] O’Connor said voters need to keep in mind that these increases do not include the routine annual budget increases the town is allowed when it

raises its levy limit by 2½ percent a year.

Brockton Enterprise, May 15, Override tab for ‘average’ home might reach \$800 in Pembroke

“The state thinks we’re a rich town, but we have a lot of young people that have been hit hard by the economy and don’t know if they can afford it,” Pratt said. “Even if God stood at the polls with a ‘Yes’ sign, there were still people so determined that they would have voted no. And they did.”

*Boston Globe, May 21,
Officials eye smaller override figure*

“I know everyone is afraid of getting pink-slipped,” he said, referring to school staff. “But some people,” who are living on fixed incomes and cannot handle the property tax increases, “have already lost their whole house,” resident Steve Kail said.

Lowell Sun, May 22, Dunstable asked to revisit override



Local government ... cont'd from page 2

are noted immediately by the Dept. of Revenue's Division of Local Services which must set local tax rates, some "fails" may not be recorded for months. We note and celebrate taxpayer victories in all communities.

* * *

Chip Faulkner came up with a new plan this year. A long time lone-resistor at his Wrentham town meeting, he wrote a letter to his local paper announcing he was boycotting that event and instead holding a meeting, AT THE SAME TIME AS THE TOWN MEETING, for people who wanted to begin planning the inevitable anti-override campaign.

Dear Chipster

Members' questions to Chip Faulkner

Why are we suddenly seeing towns whose overrides have failed going right back to the ballot with another try? It seems in the past they at least waited until the next year.

Signed, Overdosed on overrides

Dear Overdosed:

The simple answer is that they put overrides on the ballot continuously because there's no law that says they can't.

Only the selectmen (or city council) can put a Proposition 2½ override on the ballot. But town meeting often passes a contingent appropriation, i.e., spending subject to an override. Until recently, this contingent appropriation became null and void if it was not approved at an override election held within 45 days of

About 25 people showed up for Chipster's meeting while 700 went to the other one. However the media, which likes controversy and conflict, ran several stories covering both groups even though the anti-override people were outnumbered twenty-eight to one. Thus was the town made aware of opposition to the override.

Override supporters were clearly irritated that some people had the audacity to boycott and ignore their biased override presentations at the town meeting.

However, this option must be used judiciously – especially if the override is a debt exclusion that requires 2/3 of town meeting support, as the one in Stow that passed by one vote.

the town meeting. But legislation passed in 2000 gives the town until September 15 to obtain voter approval made at an annual town meeting (and 90 days after a special town meeting).

The change was explained as giving towns more time to publicize an election, and allowing towns with May town meetings to hold an override in September instead of during the summer; we saw both these things as giving activists more time to organize a "no" campaign and encouraging taxpayer turnout. But those towns who have town meeting earlier interpret it as a chance to fit in more elections! If enough second attempts fail, we hope that towns will realize they are spending more money on elections than they can afford.

FMG Massachusetts Guest Speakers – 2003

The Friday Morning Group (FMG), led by Chip Faulkner, continues to meet every month to discuss current Massachusetts events. Initiated by Americans for Tax Reform, center-right groups around the country work to keep the "leave us alone coalition" alive.

January - Karen Bailey, State projects manager, Americans for Tax Reform

February - Ed Naile, Chairman, Coalition of New Hampshire Taxpayers

March - Steve Adams, President & CEO, Pioneer Institute

April - Edward F. King, Founder, Citizens for Limited Taxation

May - Chris Anderson, President, Massachusetts High Technology Council

CLT staff in demand as speakers

Chipster: Jan. 8, North Attleboro CATV; Jan. 17, Plymouth CATV; Feb. 13, Medway Taxpayers Association; Mar. 10, Somerset CATV; Mar. 12, Carver taxpayer group; Apr. 14, Homeowners Alliance for Lower Taxation (Plymouth); Apr. 17, Milton Republican town committee.

Barbara: Radio: Jerry Williams, Mar. 8, WRKO reunion; Don Feder, WEZE; Pat Whitley, WRKO tribute to Jerry Williams; WBZ News; Blute and Ozone, WRKO. **TV:** Fox News and WB News; PBS, Emily Rooney, on the Rosenberg bill; TV-56 WB, Jon Keller on state budget; WBZ TV, John Henning on Internet

and other state taxes, and Joe Bergantino on legislative reform; NECN's "Talk of New England," Feb. 26, May 15; Framingham CATV, taped May 21 with host Dave Hutchinson and CLT activist Ted Tripp, two opponents on state budget, sent to various Comcast outlets.

Both Chipster and Barbara are regular guests on the Tony Gill Show, WAIC-FM in Springfield.

Chip Ford: May 1, Howie Carr, WRKO, on Jerry Williams tribute, May 27, primary enforcement seat belt law; Jun. 2, Pat Whitley, WRKO, seat belt law.



Jerry Williams – 1923-2003

“The Dean of Talk Radio”

Jerry Williams, the Dean of Talk Radio, died on April 29th. A friend of freedom and the taxpayer, Jerry was honored along with Avi Nelson and David Brudnoy at the CLT dinner in 1997 (photo) – though he still said “I never had a dinner” because it was “just a buffet.”

Jerry drew Chip Ford into the political arena to lead the fight against the mandatory seat belt law in 1985, and again in 1994. Chip also worked with him and Dorothea Vitrac to save the town of New Braintree from Governor Dukakis’ prison, to sue the Dukakis administration



“Good night, good luck and good night to you,” Jerry.

over its “fee” increases, on the Dukakis “recall petition” when The Duke was running for president, and on many other issues. Chip spoke at his memorial service, held at the No Name Restaurant.

As host of “The Governors” show from 1989 to 1996 on WRKO, he gave a forum first to Barbara Anderson and Howie Carr, then Barbara and Bob Katzen, to keep the public informed on Beacon Hill issues.

His final advice to us all, delivered on the booklet at his wake, was “ride more merry-go-rounds, pick more daisies.”

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The Activist News

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Will we be “nickled and dimed” to death?