



## AMERICANS for TAX REFORM

Grover G. Norquist  
President

August 4, 2008

Dear Pledge signer,

On behalf of California taxpayers, I write to thank you for your commitment to protecting their interests.

However, as you know, tax threats are looming large in the midst of the current budget negotiations. Your constituents will continue to rely on you to make sure that their tax burden does not increase.

Faced with approximately \$15 billion in overspending for the next fiscal year, big spenders are ratcheting up their calls for higher taxes. The proposed sales tax increase would be disastrous for California families and employers, especially at a time when the state economy is already reeling from record high food and energy prices.

**California's budget mess does not come out of nowhere.** As in most states these days, the state does not have a revenue problem, it has a spending problem. For years, fiscal profligacy has reigned supreme, with general fund spending having increased roughly 31 percent, up from \$78.7 billion in 2003-04 to \$103 billion in 2007-08.

**Now is the time to tighten the state's fiscal belt.** Last year The Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association published the California Piglet Book in cooperation with Citizens Against Government Waste. The publication identifies \$3 billion in savings for California's state and local government, providing a good starting point.

**Increased transparency in government spending can further help to identify savings by eliminating the potential for fraud, waste, and abuse,** which unfortunately are part of too many state and local budgets. Eleven states have already passed legislation mandating the creation of single searchable websites detailing comprehensive information on government expenditures ranging from grants and contracts to non-contractual payments and other expenditures. In two other states, Missouri and South Carolina, governors have taken executive action to the same effect.

In making government expenditures transparent, you empower taxpayers to become fiscal watchdogs. Just imagine how many savings can be identified if almost 38 million residents can help monitor state expenditures!

**In the face of a record deficit, now more than ever it is imperative that California taxpayers be involved with the spending decisions being made in Sacramento.**

We at Americans for Tax Reform look forward to continuing to work with you and all California Pledge signers to fight tax increases and to bring greater accountability into government finance. Feel free to call on me or ATR's state affairs manager Patrick Gleason at 202-785-0266 or [pgleason@atr.org](mailto:pgleason@atr.org).

Onward,

Grover Norquist

1920 L Street NW

Suite 200

Washington, DC

20036

T: (202) 785-0266

F: (202) 785-0261

[www.atr.org](http://www.atr.org)