



*Nothing is politically right
that is morally wrong.*

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JEFFERSON CITY

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Bill Protecting Taxpayers Closer to Law *Sen. Gibbons' Bill Mandates Rollbacks, Closes Loopholes, and Informs Taxpayers*

JEFFERSON CITY – A Senate bill that protects Missouri taxpayers from tax increases caused by reassessment today received an overwhelming vote of approval from the House. Senate Leader Mike Gibbons, R-Kirkwood, sponsored the property tax reform bill that will now be considered tomorrow by a conference committee comprised of members of both Chambers.

Gibbons said the bill ends back door tax increases, closes tax increase loopholes, and requires earlier notice and more information to taxpayers.

"The days of taxpayers getting hit with tax increases because of reassessment are almost over," he said. "We're protecting taxpayers from being taxed out of their homes and businesses."

The measure, Senate Bill 711, mandates that all taxing jurisdictions, regardless of whether they are operating at or below their tax rate ceiling, must roll back their tax rate to counter reassessment increases. Currently, only taxing jurisdictions operating at their tax rate ceiling are required by Missouri's Constitution to roll back to protect taxpayers, leaving taxing jurisdictions operating below their ceiling to approve back door tax increases with no legal recourse.

"With this bill, taxing boards must roll back their tax rates to protect taxpayers," he said. "Also, they will no longer be able to apply voter approved increases to new reassessments meaning no more double whammies on the taxpayers."

The bill closes a loophole that allows taxing districts to apply new voter approved levies to future and unknown assessments. The Attorney General's office issued an [opinion](#) in 2003 (107-2003) stating that taxing jurisdictions can take a tax increase approved by the voters, for example in 2006, and then apply that new tax rate to the higher reassessed value in 2007.

It also requires that taxpayers receive a projected tax liability along with their reassessment notices, notifying them months, rather than weeks in advance of reassessment and tax increases.

Gibbons said charter counties and the City of St. Louis will provide these in 2009, with all other counties participating by 2011.

"It's wrong that taxpayers only learn of their tax bill about one month before it's due," he said. "Taxpayers have a right to know what their tax bill will be as early as possible so they can better plan for reassessment challenges and prepare for the taxes they owe in December."

More information about the bill is available at www.senate.mo.gov, keyword search SB711.

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