

---

County Executive Scott Walker  
Statement in support of the Wisconsin Taxpayer Protection Amendment  
February 15, 2006

---

Taxes in Wisconsin are too high. It's just that simple.

Taxpayers in Wisconsin carry the 5<sup>th</sup> highest tax burden in the country and that burden is growing at a pace faster than personal income. Too many people and too many jobs are moving out of my county- and out of our state - because of the high tax burden.

A recent study by the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance over a five-year cycle shows that we lost \$4.X billion worth of value and \$XXX million worth of income to other states. The top 9 nine states for migration from our state had property and income taxes that are 25% to 73% lower than Wisconsin. In addition to losing population in the 55 to 79 age group, we are also losing population in the 20 to 29 age group. This is a problem for the future of our state.

Milwaukee County was the only county in the state to lose population in the 2000 census. From 1992 to 2002, the tax levy proposed by former County Executives increased by over \$75 million dollars, from \$141,804,259 by Dave Schultz in 1992 to \$216,848,179 by Tom Ament in 2002. That's a 52% increase in property taxes. It's no wonder people moved out.

In contrast, I have proposed four straight budgets that did not increase the property tax levy from the previous year. The migration of people and jobs leveled off and we are still fighting to hold the line on taxes.

Some opponents of the Taxpayer Protection Amendment might point to our record and suggest that the answer to tax relief is just electing more candidates like me as an alternative to making the change on the state level. The problem with that logic is that one or two officials don't control all of the other taxing authorities in their area.

The Taxpayer Protection Amendment ultimately puts the taxpayers of this state in control. If there is a true need that goes beyond the limits, they have the right to vote. But if there is not, then government must live within those limits.

Families in my county – and around the state - already have to live with budgets that have limits. It's about time that government did too.