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NEWS

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Help for Voters in Talking with Legislative Candidates
Taxpayers Alliance Provides Background Information, Sample Questions on State Finance

MADISON—Would you support raising the state sales tax to increase aid to schools—or to trim state income tax rates? How about increasing property taxes on businesses or eliminating the state corporate income tax? Should the state be required to maintain a funded “rainy-day” reserve or to limit, in some way, its expenditure growth?

These are just a few of 15 questions on state finances prepared by the nonpartisan Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance (WISTAX) to promote voter understanding of complex fiscal issues and to aid them in evaluating the positions of state legislative candidates. The short questions, along with concise background information, are contained in the latest issue of WISTAX’s *Wisconsin Taxpayer* magazine. The questions are also available on the research group’s web site, www.wistax.org.

“During election campaigns, candidates of varying persuasions and partisan affiliations contact WISTAX seeking background on state and local government. Civic groups ask us for help in identifying major issues to include in candidate question-and-answer sessions,” WISTAX President Todd A. Berry noted. “We thought this brief set of questions and supporting facts would help legislative candidates and voters alike.”

The questions cover three areas of frequent WISTAX research: state finances, taxation, and health care finance. Some of the specific topics include: state budget reform, building and maintaining state budget reserves, tax overhaul, spending policies, health-savings accounts, and government-sponsored health insurance financing.

A free copy of *The Wisconsin Taxpayer* report “Questions for State Candidates” is available by contacting WISTAX at 401 North Lawn Ave., Madison, WI 53704-5033; e-mailing wistax@wistax.org; visiting www.wistax.org; or phoning 608.241.9789. □