

1st Michigan Tea Party Alliance

HB 5219 Recommendations

January 31, 2012

As an advocate for maximizing citizen involvement in government, the 1st Michigan Tea Party Alliance supports holding votes for property tax millages during the November general election. Voter turnout during a November election is far greater than at other times of the year, especially during even number years. Voter turnout during an off month, such as February or May can be in the range of 15-25%, while voter turnout during November is generally two to three times greater.

If a governmental unit believes it is in the community's best interest to move forward with a property tax vote, we strongly recommend that this vote be scheduled for November in an even numbered year, when voter turnout is the greatest. Scheduling the vote at any other time of year limits citizen participation and disenfranchises voters.

We appreciate that HB 5219 moves the citizens of Michigan toward greater self-government but would like to propose the following two suggestions to further strengthen this bill:

The new language proposed for Section 24f(4) of HB 5219 states,

"AFTER DECEMBER 31, 2011, ANY QUESTION TO THE ELECTORS OF A TAXING UNIT THAT WILL RESULT IN AN INCREASE IN REVENUE FOR THAT TAXING UNIT SHALL BE PLACED ON THE NOVEMBER BALLOT OF AN EVEN NUMBERED YEAR."(emphasis added)

It is our opinion that the public interest would be best served if all questions, regardless of whether it results in an increase in revenue, be placed on the November ballot of an even numbered year. We view the intent of this legislation as to insure that the public is afforded every opportunity to contribute to the public policy dialogue by casting their vote in these important elections. Therefore, we recommend that there should be no exemptions from the requirement to hold these elections during the November general election.

There is another exemption provided for in HB 5219. Section 24f(1) contains an exemption for "*ad valorem special assessment millage for police or fire protection under 1951 PA 33, MCL 41.801 to 41.813.*"

Again, we respectfully urge the Committee to amend this bill by removing all exemptions and requiring all millage votes to be held in November of even numbered years.

Recent Livingston County Voter Turnout

Year	Year Type	Month	Election	% Turnout
2010	even	February	Hartland School	15.69%
2010	even	February	Pinckney School	22.79%
2011	odd	February	Pinckney Library	14.89%
2011	odd	May	Howell Township	23.23%
2011	odd	November	Green Oak Township Fire	26.88%
2011	odd	November	Green Oak Township Police	26.74%
2010	even	November	Dexter Library Bond	58.18%
2010	even	November	Putnam Township	49.09%
2010	even	November	Marion Township	52.42%

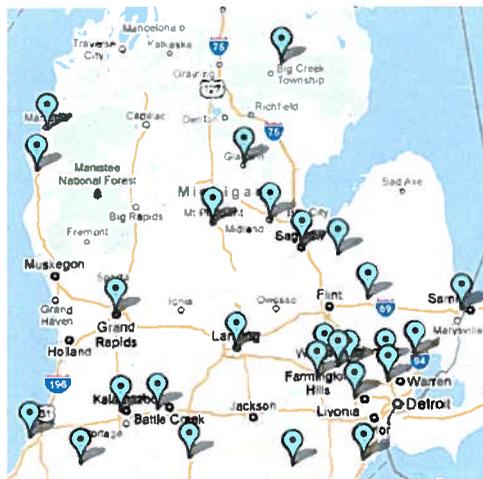
In sum, it is our position that no local governing authority shall be permitted to choose to hold a property tax vote during times of the year that historically have minimal voter turnout. Permitting the scheduling of such votes during these times endorse the idea that a minority of voters can control the public policy and taxation of an entire community.

Respectfully submitted by,



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Grassroots in Michigan
Southeast Michigan 9/12 Project
Allegan Tea Party
Berrien County Tea Party
Lapeer County Tea Party Patriots
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Western Thumb Tea Party Group
Calhoun County Tea Party
Central Macomb Patriots
We the People of Gladwin County
Common Sense Patriots of Branch County
Lakes Area Tea Party
Tea Party Patriots of West Oakland County
Brighton Tea Party
Ludington Tea Party
Manistee Area Tea Party
Patriots of SE Michigan
SW Michigan Tea Party Patriots
We the People of Mid Michigan
Port Huron Tea Party



1st Michigan Tea Party Alliance – Membership Map