

January 7, 2008

Dear ATU Member:

Would you trade your job for sixty-six cents per day? Of course not.

Yet, that is what state legislators have asked you to consider on January 29, when Florida residents will have the opportunity to vote on a dangerous proposal that is being billed as “property tax relief.”

**What It Does:**

The constitutional amendment would double the homestead exemption, allow homeowners to transfer up to \$500,000 of their Save Our Homes benefit if they move, create a \$25,000 exemption on tangible property and cap increases on non-homestead property's taxable value.

**What They Are Not Telling You:**

If the measure passes, the average person would save just \$20 per month, or sixty-six cents per day.

**The Impact On Transit:**

If voters support the referendum, the reduced flow of tax dollars to local governments would be staggering. The majority of the state's transit systems rely in part on property taxes to operate. Hillsborough, Pinellas and Volusia counties, which get the bulk of their transit funding from property taxes, would be hit especially hard.

Transit agencies would be forced to make deep cuts in midday, evening, and weekend service. They would also be likely to raise fares, which would have the affect of reducing ridership. **Layoffs would be difficult to avoid.** Seniors who rely on the bus would have trouble getting to doctor appointments, and passengers with disabilities would see reductions in paratransit service.

**The Affect On Other County Employees:**

Less than a year ago, local governments reduced property tax revenues by \$2.3 billion as a result of a bill passed by the legislature. The loss of further local revenue would be devastating for county services. Most counties won't even guess how their budgets would be impacted.

Yet, most county officials, who are aware of the way Floridians feel about property taxes, are for the most part staying on the sidelines. While county officials talk bluntly about the affects of property tax cuts, they will not spend taxpayer money to sway voters.

**It's Up To You:**

Transit workers come into contact with thousands of people every day. Please tell your friends and family members about the devastating affect that the property tax measure could have on your community. Most importantly, for the sake of your job, it is critical that you **VOTE NO** on the property tax amendment.

In solidarity,

Warren S. George

