

2008 Statewide Ballot Questions

2008 Statewide Ballot Question 1

State Personal Income Tax—SUMMARY

This proposed law would reduce the state personal income tax rate to 2.65% for all categories of taxable income for the tax year beginning on or after January 1, 2009, and would eliminate the tax for all tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2010. The personal income tax applies to income received or gain realized by individuals and married couples, by estates of deceased persons, by certain trustees and other fiduciaries, by persons who are partners in and receive income from partnerships, by corporate trusts, and by persons who receive income as shareholders of "S corporations" as defined under federal tax law. The proposed law would not affect the tax due on income or gain realized in a tax year beginning before January 1, 2009. The proposed law states that if any of its parts were declared invalid, the other parts would stay in effect.

A **YES VOTE** would reduce the state personal income tax rate to 2.65% for the tax year beginning on January 1, 2009, and would eliminate the tax for all tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2010. A **NO VOTE** would make no change in state income tax laws.

2008 Statewide Ballot Question 2

Possession of Marijuana—SUMMARY

This proposed law would replace the criminal penalties for possession of one ounce or less of marijuana with a new system of civil penalties, to be enforced by issuing citations, and would exclude information regarding this civil offense from the state's criminal record information system. Offenders age 18 or older would be subject to forfeiture of the marijuana plus a civil penalty of \$100. Offenders under the age of 18 would be subject to the same forfeiture and, if they complete a drug awareness program within one year of the offense, the same \$100 penalty. Offenders under 18 and their parents or legal guardian would be notified of the offense and the option for the offender to complete a drug awareness program developed by the state Department of Youth Services. Such programs would include ten hours of community service and at least four hours of instruction or group discussion concerning the use and abuse of marijuana and other drugs and emphasizing early detection and prevention of substance abuse. The penalty for offenders under 18 who fail to complete such a program within one year could be increased to as much as \$1,000, unless the offender showed an inability to pay, an inability to participate in such a program, or the unavailability of

such a program. Such an offender's parents could also be held liable for the increased penalty. Failure by an offender under 17 to complete such a program could also be a basis for a delinquency proceeding. The proposed law would define possession of one ounce or less of marijuana as including possession of one ounce or less of tetrahydrocannabinol ("THC"), or having metabolized products of marijuana or THC in one's body. Under the proposed law, possessing an ounce or less of marijuana could not be grounds for state or local government entities imposing any other penalty, sanction, or disqualification, such as denying student financial aid, public housing, public financial assistance including unemployment benefits, the right to operate a motor vehicle, or the opportunity to serve as a foster or adoptive parent. The proposed law would allow local ordinances or bylaws that prohibit the public use of marijuana, and would not affect existing laws, practices, or policies concerning operating a motor vehicle or taking other actions while under the influence of marijuana, unlawful possession of prescription forms of marijuana, or selling, manufacturing, or trafficking in marijuana. The money received from the new civil penalties would go to the city or town where the offense occurred.

A **YES VOTE** would replace the criminal penalties for possession of one ounce or less of marijuana with a new system of civil penalties. A **NO VOTE** would make no change in state criminal laws concerning possession of marijuana.

2008 Statewide Ballot Question 3

Dog Racing—SUMMARY

This proposed law would prohibit any dog racing or racing meeting in Massachusetts where any form of betting or wagering on the speed or ability of dogs occurs. The State Racing Commission would be prohibited from accepting or approving any application or request for racing dates for dog racing. Any person violating the proposed law could be required to pay a civil penalty of not less than \$20,000 to the Commission. The penalty would be used for the Commission's administrative purposes, subject to appropriation by the state Legislature. All existing parts of the chapter of the state's General Laws concerning dog and horse racing meetings would be interpreted as if they did not refer to dogs. These changes would take effect January 1, 2010. The proposed law states that if any of its parts were declared invalid, the other parts would stay in effect. A **YES VOTE** would prohibit dog races on which betting or wagering occurs, effective January 1, 2010. A **NO VOTE** would make no change in the laws governing dog racing. *Continued on page 9*



VOLUNTEER VIEWS

Ellen Gold
Coordinator of Volunteers

I want to wish all of you a very Happy Thanksgiving. Enjoy the day and may you share it with your family and friends. As you reflect and give thanks for your family, friends and good fortune, keep in mind the following:

As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them. ~John Fitzgerald Kennedy

ABOVE and BEYOND

A big thank you to the following volunteers for all their extra efforts: **Venessa O'Brien**, for all her hard work decorating the Maple Tree Shoppe; **Jean Glantz**, working in the office and Maple Tree Shoppe; **Irving Ser and Miriam Odentz**, entering statistics; **Verna Nickelson**, helping in the office and **Marcia Lieber**, sending the monthly birthday cards. We also thank all those who have filled in at the last minute and subbed in the Maple Tree Shoppe, the dining room and the Meals on Wheels program. We appreciate your flexibility in being able to help out with very little notice.

Thanks to **Sullivan Paper Company** for their terrific donation of Christmas wrapping paper to sell at our Annual Sale.

THANK YOU COLLATORS

On the last Tuesday of the month, a faithful group of volunteers gather to collate *The Voice*. Thanks to **Anamarie**

Friberg, Charlotte Burke, Debbie Dakers and Kathy Luty for making sure everything runs smoothly. Thanks also to all the volunteers for their dedication: **Ann Bellas, Jim Bellas, Helen Blount, Carolyn Dillon, Polly Felici, Cathy Ferrero, Joe Flanagan, Ann Gilman, Jean Glantz, Kathy Gonzales, Claudette Grzywacz, Clem Grzywacz, Salma Haddad, Joyce Hastings, Marilyn Hurst, Diana Kannavos, Marie Kozlowski, Marion Lachut, Louise Lopardo, Angie Morisi, Bev Morgan, Shirley Nichols, Mary Nilsson, Mary Raschi, Mary Jean Ryan, Mary Ricco, Rita Soter, Bob Stirton, Terry Stirton, Eleanor Stolar, Gloria Tramazzo, and Rose Troiano**. Without all your help we would not be able to send our newsletter out so efficiently. To join our friendly group, or for information on any volunteer opportunity, call Ellen Gold at 565-4150.

MAPLE TREE GIFT SHOPPE

If you are looking for an interesting or unusual gift, be sure to stop by the Maple Tree Gift Shoppe. Our shop has many new items and is stocked with a wide assortment of gifts, decorations, and cards for the holidays. Many of our items are new and all are reasonably priced. We offer a cozy atmosphere with no crowds and very helpful and friendly sales staff. The Maple Tree Shoppe is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Stop in and see us, we're sure you'll be pleased.