



Don't Let Wealthy Special Interests Overturn the Will of the Voters – Don't Let Them Repeal Question 2

Hearing Date

1 PM, Monday, March 20, 2017

State House Room 127, State Capitol Building

Taxation Committee

Talking Points for Testimony

Ignoring the Will of Maine Voters

Legislators submitted five bills to overturn the results of Question 2—the ballot initiative voters passed in November that increases state funding for our public schools by asking only those households making over \$200,000 to pay a little more.

Mainers voted to tax the wealthy because recent state income tax breaks for the wealthy have trickled down into property tax increases for everyone else. We can't let legislators influenced by special interests give huge tax cuts for the rich by overturning the will of Maine voters.

Tax Fairness is Critical for our Future

When the rich and special interests manipulate the tax code for their own benefit, the foundations of thriving communities and opportunity for all Mainers suffer. Walking back the 3 percent surcharge will just shift costs onto low and middle income Mainers.

That means income these Mainers would be spending in their communities would instead pay for tax breaks for the rich, who are more likely to invest their dollars on Wall Street. This would worsen inequality and shrink the resources available to take on shared priorities like quality education and good jobs.

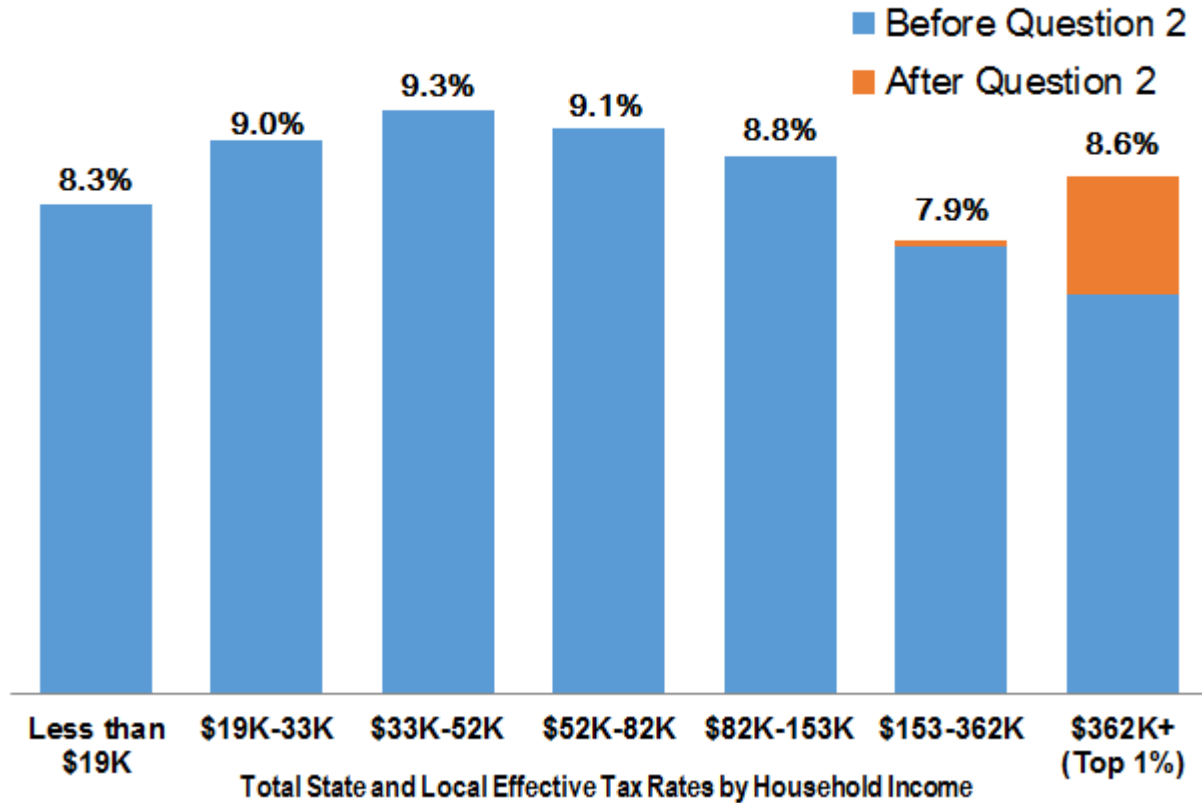
The Wrong Direction for Maine

In 2011, Maine enacted the largest income tax cut in its history that overwhelmingly benefitted the wealthiest Mainers. It shifted costs onto property taxpayers and undermined shared investment in building a strong economy. Six years later, property taxes are nearing historic highs and Maine's economic recovery languishes near the back of the pack among all states. In fact, four of the five largest income-tax-cutting states in recent years – including Maine – have experienced slower job growth since enacting their cuts than the rest of the country.

Maine needs a plan that builds a foundation for a strong economy and thriving communities. Expensive tax cuts for the wealthy mean we have less to invest in a stronger workforce, help young families succeed, support modern infrastructure, and provide services our communities rely on.

We urge you to testify to the Taxation Committee at the public hearing on Monday, March 20. Tell legislators why it matters to you to honor the will of Maine voters and protect funding for our schools and communities by asking the wealthiest Mainers to pay a little more. You can also contact your legislator and ask them to implement Question 2 as approved by Maine voters last November.

Mainers Voted for a Fairer Tax Code



Source: MECEP analysis of data from the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy

Question 2 makes our tax code fairer. Any attempt to walk back the will of the voters would amount to huge tax cuts for the rich and a reversion to a tax system where the wealthy pay the least and low and middle income Mainers are forced to make up the difference.