



SJR 1
Senate Joint Resolution
Proposed Constitutional Amendment

Property Taxation—One Percent Limitation

Shall the state constitution be amended to replace the present forty mill limit upon those property taxes which are imposed without voter approval (in effect a limitation of two percent of the true and fair value of the taxable property) with a new provision under which the maximum allowable rate for such property taxes would be one percent of the true and fair value of the property?

Vote cast by members of the 1971 Legislature on final passage:
SENATE: (49 members) Yeas, 47; Nays, 0; Absent or not voting, 2.
HOUSE: (99 members) Yeas, 96; Nays, 0; Absent or not voting, 3.

NOTE: New special toll-free telephone service offered to voters requesting in-depth information on state measures. See page 5 for details.

Statement for

SJR No. 1 Will Reduce Regular Property Taxes

Property taxpayers will save about \$50 million per year on regular property levies if SJR No. 1 is approved by the voters in November. Under laws already enacted by the Legislature, which will be implemented if the people approve SJR No. 1, the property tax millage allocated to the state will be reduced from 4 mills to 1 mill. Two mills now levied by the state are eliminated and the third mill is transferred to school districts.

Present Constitutional Limit Inadequate

The present 40-mill limit on regular property tax levies is not adequate to protect property taxpayers from possible future increases. Actually, the effective current limit on regular property taxes is a legislatively enacted statutory limit of 22 mills. This limit could be increased to 40 mills by any future Legislature, without a vote of the people, unless SJR No. 1 is approved.

High Property Taxes Hardship On Many

Property taxes more than doubled in the five years between 1966 and 1971—increasing from \$285.5 million levied for collection in 1966 to \$622.9 million in 1971.

Property taxes have become an extreme burden on homeowners, farm operators, and businessmen. They have become a major hardship to the elderly and retired persons living on a fixed income. Ownership of property is a poor measure of ability to pay for governmental services.

Constitutional Limit of 1 Percent Best Way

Adoption of SJR No. 1 not only has the same effect as reducing the assessment ratio from 50% to 25%, but also is

the best and most easily understood way to constitutionally limit regular property taxes to not more than 1% of true and fair value.

SJR No. 1 was enacted by an unanimous vote of both houses of the Legislature, but it must be approved by the people in November to become law.

Cast your vote on November 7 to protect your home, farm and business property from excessive taxation.

Committee appointed to compose statement FOR Senate Joint Resolution 1:

MARTIN J. DURKAN, State Senator; OTTO AMEN, State Representative; HORACE W. BOZARTH, State Representative.

Advisory Committee: EMMETT J. NIST, Chairman, Citizens for SJR-1%; JACK SILVERS, Master, Washington State Grange; ARNIE WEINMEISTER, President, Joint Council of Teamsters No. 28; H. A. EVEREST, President, Washington Association of Realtors, Inc., and C. DAVID GORDON, President, Association of Washington Business.

The Law as it now exists:

The state constitution presently provides that the aggregate of all regular property tax levies on real and personal property imposed by the state and by all taxing districts except port and public utility districts shall not for any given year exceed forty mills (four percent) on the dollar of assessed valuation. Assessed valuation, however, is defined in the constitution as meaning fifty percent of the true and fair value of the taxable property—thus, in effect, the constitutional current limitation is equal to two percent of the true and fair value of the property—although as explained on page 36 of this pamphlet in connection with Initiative 44, a lower statutory limitation of slightly more than one percent (twenty-two mills) is currently in effect.

In addition, the constitution presently permits the various taxing districts which are subject to this limitation to impose additional taxes ("excess levies") when authorized to do so by the voters, on either an annual basis for current expenses or on a long-term basis to fund general obligation bonds. In order for either type of excess levy to be imposed, the constitution presently requires that the following two conditions be met:

- (1) The tax must be approved by at least sixty percent of the electors voting on the proposition to levy such additional tax; and
- (2) The total number of persons voting on the proposition must constitute not less than forty percent of the total number of votes cast in the taxing district at its last preceding general election.

Effect of SJR No. 1 if approved into Law:

This proposed constitutional amendment would not alter the present provisions relating to voter approval of excess levies.* However, it would replace the present constitutional forty mill limit upon regular property tax levies (i.e., those which are imposed without voter authorization of excess levies), as above described, with a new constitutional limitation under which the maximum allowable rate of such regular property tax levies would be one percent of the true and fair value of all taxable property—rather than (in effect) two percent as under the present constitution.

*This aspect of SJR No. 1 should be contrasted with HJR No. 47, as described on page 48 of this voter's pamphlet.

NOTE: Ballot title and the above explanatory comment were written by the Attorney General as required by state law. Complete text of Senate Joint Resolution No. 1 starts on Page 101.

Statement against

Before any constitutional amendment can be submitted to the voters for decision, our state constitution requires that the proposal must first be approved by at least two-thirds of the members of each branch of the state legislature.

Senate Joint Resolution No. 1 was so approved by the 1971 Legislature and no member could be enlisted to write a statement against the measure for publication in this pamphlet.

last amended by section 5, chapter 92, Laws of 1970, 2nd Ex. Sess. and RCW 84.52.050 which read as follows:

Except as hereinafter provided, the aggregate of all tax levies upon real and personal property by the state, municipal corporations, taxing districts and governmental agencies, now existing or hereafter created, shall not exceed twenty-two mills on the dollar of assessed valuation with respect to levies made in 1970 and twenty-one mills on the dollar of assessed valuation with respect to levies made in subsequent years, which assessed valuation shall be fifty percent of the true and fair value of such property in money: PROVIDED, That if an amendment to Article VII, section 2 of the state Constitution, as amended by Amendment 17, imposing a limit on property taxes of, in effect, one percent of the true and fair value of property is approved by the voters, such aggregate of all tax levies shall not exceed twenty mills on the dollar of assessed valuation with respect to levies made in years subsequent to such voter approval; and within and subject to the aforesaid limitation the levy by the state shall not exceed two mills to be used exclusively for the public assistance program of the state and the levy by any county shall not exceed four mills: PROVIDED, That if such constitutional amendment is so approved, the authority of the state to levy not to exceed two mills to be used exclusively for the public assistance program of the state shall be reduced to not to exceed one mill; and upon and after the effective date of the provisions of chapter 262, Laws of 1969 ex. sess., which impose a tax upon net income, such authority of the state shall expire and the levy by any county may exceed four mills but shall not exceed five mills; the levy by or for any school district shall not exceed seven mills: PROVIDED, That in each of the years 1967 and 1968 and 1969 and 1970 the state shall levy a property tax of four mills of which two mills shall be used exclusively for the public assistance program of the state and of which two mills shall be used exclusively for the support of the common schools; and in such years in which the state shall validly levy a property tax of two mills for the support of the common schools, the levy by or for any school district shall not exceed six mills: PROVIDED FURTHER, That the levy by or for any union high school district shall not exceed two-fifths of the maximum levy permissible for any school district without a vote of the electors thereof and the levy by or for any component district within a union high school district shall not exceed three-fifths of the maximum levy permissible for any school district without a vote of the electors thereof: PROVIDED FURTHER, That the levy against any nonhigh school district for the high school district fund shall not exceed two-fifths of the maximum levy permissible for any school district without a vote of the electors thereof and the levy by or for any such nonhigh school district shall not exceed the balance of such maximum permissible levy; the levy for any road district shall not exceed five mills; and the levy by or for any city or town shall not exceed seven and one-half mills: PROVIDED FURTHER, That counties of the fifth class and under are hereby authorized to levy from four to five and one-half mills for general county purposes and from three and one-half to five mills for county road purposes if the total levy for both purposes does not exceed nine mills: PROVIDED FURTHER, That counties of the fourth and the ninth class are hereby authorized to levy four and one-half mills until such time as the junior taxing agencies are utilizing all the millage available to them.

Nothing herein shall prevent levies at the rates provided by existing law by or for any port or power district are each amended to read as follows:

"Except as hereinafter provided, the aggregate of all tax levies upon real and personal property by the state, municipal corporations, taxing districts and governmental agencies, now existing or hereafter created, shall not exceed twenty mills on the dollar of assessed valuation, which assessed valuation

shall be fifty percent of the true and fair value of such property in money.

Nothing herein contained shall prohibit the legislature from allocating or reallocating up to twenty mills between the taxing districts of the state and its political subdivisions and nothing herein contained shall prevent levies at the rates provided by existing law by or for any port or power district."

EXPLANATORY COMMENT

Initiative to the Legislature No. 44 (Statutory Tax Limitation—20 Mills)—Filed October 15, 1970 by the 40-Mill Tax Limit Committee—Lester P. Jenkins, Secretary. Signatures (229,785) filed December 30, 1970 and found sufficient and the measure was certified to the Legislature as of January 29, 1971. The Legislature took no action and, as provided by the state constitution, the initiative will be submitted to the voters for final decision at the November 7, 1972 state general election.

COMPLETE TEXT OF

Senate Joint Resolution

1

Proposed Constitutional Amendment

Ballot Title as issued by the Attorney General:

Property Taxation—One Percent Limitation

Shall the state constitution be amended to replace the present forty mill limit upon those property taxes which are imposed without voter approval (in effect a limitation of two percent of the true and fair value of the taxable property) with a new provision under which the maximum allowable rate for such property taxes would be one percent of the true and fair value of the property?

BE IT RESOLVED, *By the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Washington, in Legislative Session Assembled:*

THAT, At the next general election to be held in this state, there shall be submitted to the qualified electors of the state for their approval and ratification, or rejection, an amendment to Article VII of the Constitution of the State of Washington by amending section 2, (Amendment 17) to read as follows:

Article VII, section 2. Except as hereinafter provided and notwithstanding any other provision of this Constitution, the aggregate of all tax levies upon real and personal property by the state and all taxing districts now existing or hereafter created, shall not in any year exceed ~~((forty mills on the dollar of assessed valuation, which assessed valuation shall be fifty))~~ one per centum of the true and fair value of such property in money: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That nothing herein shall prevent levies at the rates now provided by law by or for any port or public utility district. The term "taxing district" for the purposes of this section shall mean any political subdivision, municipal corporation, district, or other governmental agency authorized by law to levy, or have levied for it, ad valorem taxes on property, other than a port or public utility district. Such aggregate limitation or any specific limitation imposed by law in conformity therewith may be exceeded only

(a) By any taxing district when specifically authorized so to do by a majority of at least three-fifths of the electors thereof

voting on the proposition to levy such additional tax submitted not more than twelve months prior to the date on which the proposed levy is to be made and not oftener than twice in such twelve month period, either at a special election or at the regular election of such taxing district, at which election the number of persons voting on the proposition shall constitute not less than forty per centum of the total number of votes cast in such taxing district at the last preceding general election;

(b) By any taxing district otherwise authorized by law to issue general obligation bonds for capital purposes, for the sole purpose of making the required payments of principal and interest on general obligation bonds issued solely for capital purposes, other than the replacement of equipment, when authorized so to do by a majority of at least three-fifths of the electors thereof voting on the proposition to issue such bonds and to pay the principal and interest thereon by an annual tax levy in excess of the limitation herein provided during the term of such bonds, submitted not oftener than twice in any calendar year, at an election held in the manner provided by law for bond elections in such taxing district, at which election the total number of persons voting on the proposition shall constitute not less than forty per centum of the total number of votes cast in such taxing district at the last preceding general election: PROVIDED, That any such taxing district shall have the right by vote of its governing body to refund any general obligation bonds of said district issued for capital purposes only, and to provide for the interest thereon and amortization thereof by annual levies in excess of the tax limitation provided for herein, AND PROVIDED FURTHER, That the provisions of this section shall also be subject to the limitations contained in Article VIII, section 6, of this Constitution;

(c) By the state or any taxing district for the purpose of paying the principal or interest on general obligation bonds outstanding on December 6, 1934; or for the purpose of preventing the impairment of the obligation of a contract when ordered so to do by a court of last resort.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the secretary of state shall cause notice of the foregoing constitutional amendment to be published at least four times during the four weeks next preceding the election in every legal newspaper in the state.

Passed the Senate January 14, 1971. Passed the House February 26, 1971.
JOHN A. CHERBERG, THOMAS A. SWAYZE, JR.,
President of the Senate. Speaker of the House.

EXPLANATORY COMMENT

All words in double parentheses and lined through are in our State Constitution at the present and are being taken out by this amendment.

COMPLETE TEXT OF

Senate Joint Resolution

5

Proposed Constitutional Amendment

Ballot Title as issued by the Attorney General:

Permitting the Authorization of Lotteries

Shall Article II, § 24 of the state constitution be amended to repeal the present total prohibition against any lottery and to substitute a qualified prohibition which would allow lotteries of any sort to be conducted after there has been specific authorization by (1) an act of the legislature approved by sixty percent of the members of both houses or (2) an initiative or referendum approved by sixty percent of the electors voting thereon?

one hundred two

BE IT RESOLVED, *By the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Washington in Legislative Session Assembled:*

THAT, At the next general election to be held in this state there shall be submitted to the qualified voters of the state for their approval and ratification, or rejection, an amendment to Article II of the Constitution of the state of Washington by amending section 24 thereof to read as follows:

Article II, section 24. The legislature shall never ~~(authorize any lottery or)~~ grant any divorce. Lotteries shall be prohibited except as specifically authorized upon the affirmative vote of sixty percent of the members of each house of the legislature or, notwithstanding any other provision of this Constitution, by referendum or initiative approved by a sixty percent affirmative vote of the electors voting thereon.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the secretary of state shall cause notice of the foregoing constitutional amendment to be published at least four times during the four weeks next preceding the election in very legal newspaper in the state.

Passed the Senate March 3, 1971.
JOHN A. CHERBERG,
President of the Senate.

Passed the House February 27, 1971.
THOMAS A. SWAYZE, JR.,
Speaker of the House.

EXPLANATORY COMMENT

All words in double parentheses and lined through are in our State Constitution at the present and are being taken out by this amendment. All words underscored do not appear in the State Constitution as it is now written but will be put in if this amendment is adopted.

COMPLETE TEXT OF

Senate Joint Resolution

38

Proposed Constitutional Amendment

Ballot Title as issued by the Attorney General:

Setting of County Officers' Salaries

Shall the state constitution be amended to allow the legislature to authorize boards of county commissioners and other county legislative authorities to set their own salaries and those of all other county officers, subject to the existing prohibition against mid-term pay increases for those officers who fix their own compensation?

BE IT RESOLVED, *By the Senate and the House of Representatives of the State of Washington, in Legislative Session Assembled:*

THAT, At the next general election to be held in this state there shall be submitted to the qualified voters of the State for their approval and ratification, or rejection, an amendment to Article XI of the state Constitution by amending section 5 (Amendment 12) and section 8 thereof to read as follows:

Article XI, section 5. The legislature, by general and uniform laws, shall provide for the election in the several counties of boards of county commissioners, sheriffs, county clerks, treasurers, prosecuting attorneys and other county, township or precinct and district officers, as public convenience may require, and shall prescribe their duties, and fix their terms of office: PROVIDED, That the legislature may, by general laws, classify the counties by population and provide for the election in certain classes of counties certain officers who shall exercise the powers and perform the duties of two or more officers. It shall regulate the compensation of all such officers, in proportion to their duties, and for that purpose may classify