

# LEGISLATIVE HOT LINE



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Sponsored by the Five Catholic Commissions and the Catholic Campaign for Human Development of the Secretariat for Catholic Charities Health and Human Services  
Diocese of Cleveland

June 1, 2006

## Urge Governor Taft to Veto TABOR/Tel—known as the Taxpayer Bill of Rights

The Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR)/Tax Expenditure Limitation restrict growth in state and local budgets from one year to the next by a formula based on the rate of inflation and population change. While all citizens want better fiscal controls, the results of this legislation will constrain elected officials from establishing state and local budgets that respond to changing economic circumstances and meet the public's changing needs.

This Tax Reform will have negative effects on health care, education, and the economic future of Ohio. We believe it will undermine the ability of local governments, school districts, and others to deliver needed public services.

The state of Colorado passed TABOR (some of the same core elements as those proposed for Ohio) and Colorado is currently seeking to suspend its program for a five-year period because of the adverse effect it had on the entire state.

John R. Corlett, Senior Fellow and Director of Public Policy and Advocacy for the Center for Community Solutions wrote, "Although Colorado is held up as an example of where TABOR has worked well, the facts reveal a state that has seen its education and health care rankings and its economic fortunes plummet. Colorado's unemployment rate has nearly doubled since the recession began in 2001. Colorado business bankruptcies soared in the first quarter of 2004 by 127 percent and total Colorado bankruptcies increased by 16 percent."

The 2005 Colorado Business Economic Outlook projects Colorado will be **last** among western states in terms of population growth. According to a 2004 Colorado Association of Non-Profit Organizations survey, "76 percent of Colorado non-profits said they experienced state budget cuts and 50 percent reported laying off staff. As Colorado's economy has faltered, TABOR actually exacerbated the situation by requiring service cuts in education, health care, parks, highways, and other vital areas."

The senior managing director of CB Richard Ellis (an international commercial real estate company), wrote, "TABOR ... will put a stranglehold on Colorado's ability to expand and attract new businesses as the economy recovers." He continued, "Colorado will be relegated to a third-world economy."

The Center for Community Solutions reports that in 1993, the year that TABOR passed, Morgan Quinto ranked Colorado as the eighth (8) most livable state in the country, but that ranking has since fallen to 23rd. (23) In fact, Colorado has slipped behind the nation and Ohio in a number of areas, since passage

of the law: **Colorado has fallen to 48th worst in prenatal care, 48th worst in K-12 education spending relative to income, 47th worst in per capita higher education spending, 48th worst in high school drop outs, 36th worst teen birth rate, and dead last — 50th — in childhood immunizations.**

**Call to Action:** Call Governor Taft's office and ask him to veto SB321 (614-466-3555). Tell him TABOR did not work in Colorado and it will not work in Ohio. Call today!

**Immigration Reform needs Action:** Most Reverend Gerald Barnes, Bishop of San Bernardino, Chairman, USCCB Committee on Migration issued the following statement  
May 25, 2006:

The passage of S.B. 2611, the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2006, in the U.S. Senate is a historic moment for our nation. While the U.S. bishops' Conference does not agree with each and every provision in the Senate-passed bill, we applaud its comprehensive approach and believe it contains many of the elements necessary to help solve the problems associated with our country's current immigration system.

As the Congressional process continues, **we urge the Senate and House of Representatives to work together to either eliminate or ameliorate the harsh enforcement provisions found in both the House- and Senate-passed versions of the legislation.**

In addition, we encourage House Members and Senators to simplify and streamline the path to citizenship for the undocumented in this country that is found in the Senate bill. We also urge Congress to maintain a viable and just temporary worker program, which includes an option to petition for permanent residency, as well as to make changes to our family-based immigration system to reduce the waiting time for families to be reunited.

Ultimately, the U.S. bishops' continued support for immigration reform legislation requires a workable and viable path to citizenship for the undocumented, significant backlog reductions for family-based visas, and a viable temporary workers program that protects both U.S. and foreign-born workers.

**Call to Action:** Contact your House and Senate members and ask them to urge the Conference Committee to work together to eliminate or ameliorate the harsh enforcement provisions found in both the House and Senate versions of the legislation.

\_ CALL THE CAPITAL SWITCHBOARD AT 202-224-3121 or email senator [voinovich @ voinovich.senate.gov](mailto:voinovich@voinovich.senate.gov) or senator [dewine@dewine.senate.gov](mailto:dewine@dewine.senate.gov) or Senate House Building or House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20510 to register your position on these important issues.

***For more information call the Diocesan Social Action Office AT 216-281-3851, or visit our web page at [www.catholic-action.org](http://www.catholic-action.org). Thank you.***