



Senate Press Office

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Heath proposes to eliminate State Ad Valorem Tax

ATLANTA (March 18, 2010) – Georgia property owners continue to contact their legislators asking about tax relief, in particular property owners. Recently the Georgia Senate passed property tax assessment and appeal reform, but State Sen. Bill Heath (R-Bremen) has gone one step further.

Heath has proposed to eliminate Georgia's state ad valorem tax. His bill, Senate Resolution 1287, would remove the state quarter mil ad valorem tax on each dollar of assessed property values. The prohibition of the tax begins once state reserve funds reach \$500 million.

“Owning your own home is an American Dream, but it is not a dream to be over taxed. We should do everything we can to relieve tax payer burdens,” said Heath. “We must get the state out of the ad valorem tax collection business. Local governments should have the ability to manage their taxes at the local level.”

The State of Georgia currently levies an ad valorem tax on all property, and is a component of local property tax bills. The state millage rate is a quarter mil (.25/\$1,000 assessed value). Counties argue that the state requires them to do property assessments and to collect ad valorem tax. Heath's resolution is a major step in allowing local governments to have more control over property taxation. Removing the state ad valorem tax will have no effect on counties, cities and school funding.

Because this measure is a Constitutional Amendment, it will require two-thirds vote in the Senate and the House before going to the voters for approval on the November 2010 ballot.

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Sen. Bill Heath serves as Chairman of the Retirement Committee and Governor Sonny Perdue's Floor Leader in the Senate. He represents the 31st Senate District which consists of Haralson and Polk counties and portions of Bartow and Paulding counties. He may be reached at 404.651.7738 or by email at billheath@billheath.net.