



## Senate Press Office

### **RELEASE**

For Immediate Release:  
March 26, 2010

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## Senate Democrats prevent Constitutional Amendment, but Republicans prevail in eliminating State Ad Valorem Tax

ATLANTA (March 26, 2010) – Today, a majority of the Georgia Senate Democrats voted against allowing the people to vote on having a say in their property taxes by voting against Senate Resolution 1287. However, Republicans recovered for the people of Georgia by prevailing with Senate Bill 517, which will remove the quarter mil state ad valorem tax.

Georgia property owners continue to contact their legislators asking about tax relief, in particular property owners. In response, State Sen. Bill Heath (R-Bremen) proposed to eliminate Georgia's state ad valorem tax. Because SR 1287 was a Constitutional Amendment, it required two-thirds vote in the Senate and the House before going to the voters for approval on the November 2010 ballot.

“Senate Republicans stood up for Georgians today when Senate Democrats chose not to allow them a voice in how they are taxed. This bill eliminates the state's portion of a tax on the American Dream, which is home ownership,” said Heath. “Homeowners need as much financial relief as possible and should not be over taxed. Today's vote only demonstrates who stand with Georgia property owners and who stands with the government.”

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 bill 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. The prohibition of the tax begins once state reserve funds reach \$500 million.

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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 31<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto:billheath@billheath.net).*