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## **Protect Our Communities: Vote "No" on Slashing the Sales Tax**

They're at it again. Carla Howell & Friends at the Committee for Small Government have qualified another anti-tax question for the November ballot, this one to slash the sales tax to 3 percent. These are the same people who brought us Question 1 in 2008, the initiative – which the voters sensibly defeated – to repeal the state income tax.

The Sales Tax Initiative would slash revenues by \$2.5 billion a year on top of the billions in cuts already made during this recession. How much is \$2.5 billion? It equals one-half of all state spending on our 1,900 public schools. Or, looking at it another way, it is equal to two and a half times as much as the state spends each year on all of our community colleges and state universities.

Here's where some of the pain would be felt.

- **Public Education.** Our public schools and colleges would have to absorb a huge share of the cuts. There would be massive layoffs, bigger class sizes, disruption of programs and a decline in the quality of education in our schools and colleges.
- **Health Care.** More cuts will hurt already struggling community hospitals, school nursing services, public health initiatives and community health centers.
- **Quality of Life.** Local aid to cities and towns would be slashed, affecting public safety, parks and recreation, senior services, libraries, road repair and so much more.
- **Economy.** By causing the sudden layoff of so many teachers, firefighters, police officers, social workers and others while we are still coping with a recession, a cut of this size could halt – or even reverse – the state's economic recovery.
- **Property Taxes.** Cities and towns would be forced to raise property taxes and seek overrides simply to maintain basic services.

A growing number of civic, human services, labor and business organizations oppose slashing the sales tax from 6.25 percent to 3 percent. Voting "yes" might feel good for a day. But losing the revenues would feel terrible for years to come, making tough times even tougher for our families, our communities and our quality of life in Massachusetts.

**Vote "NO" on Slashing the Sales Tax on November 2!**