

Common Questions About The Taxpayer Protection Pledge

When and where did the Pledge originate?

The first anti-tax Pledge was used in the New Hampshire Governor's race in 1972. Since then, the *Taxpayer Protection Pledge* has been distributed to state-wide and state legislative candidates and incumbents in all fifty states. Similar Pledges are distributed to U.S. Congressional and Presidential candidates.

How many government officers and representatives have taken the Pledge?

As of April 17, 2002, eight Governors have taken the Pledge, two state Treasurers, and four state Secretaries of State. In addition, 1253 state Legislators have taken the Pledge. Over 800 candidates for state legislative office took the Pledge in 2000. Thirty-seven U.S. Senators and 212 U.S. Representatives have taken the federal Pledge. Numerous county and local legislators have also taken the Pledge. President George W. Bush signed the Pledge.

What does the Pledge commit a candidate/incumbent to do?

The Pledge commits a government representative or officer "to oppose [and vote against/veto] any efforts to increase taxes." The Pledge does not commit opposition to revenue neutral shifts in the tax code.

Can the language of the Pledge be altered to allow exceptions?

No. There are no exceptions to the Pledge. Tax-and-spend politicians often use "emergencies" to justify increasing taxes. In the unfortunate event of a *real* crisis or natural disaster, legislators should cut spending in other areas instead of aggravating the situation.

Are 'user fees' considered taxes?

No. The term 'user fee' refers to a voluntary payment for either a service or product, such as: entering a museum or for use of a government owned photocopy machine. User fee increases commensurate with the real cost of delivering the service or product are not tax increases. Excise taxes, sales taxes, or taxes levied on businesses to pay for government regulation are not user fees.

How long am I bound to the Pledge?

Pledge signers are bound for the duration of their tenure in the office to which they were elected. For example, if a Pledge signer runs for the state house of representatives, wins the election, and two years later decides to run for the state senate, he /she must sign the Pledge again for it to apply to his/her tenure in the senate.