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Campaign Against Hidden Taxes
Form Ballot Measure Committee: “Stop Hidden Taxes” is Launched

Sacramento, CA: The California Taxpayers’ Association and California Chamber of Commerce and today announced a coordinated effort to qualify the “Stop Hidden Taxes” initiative for the November 2010 ballot – an effort to stop the Legislature from imposing hidden taxes on California taxpayers just by calling them fees.

“California’s Constitution requires the Legislature to pass new or increased taxes with a two-thirds vote, but the politicians in Sacramento have found a gimmick to get around this provision in their attempt to get more money from taxpayers,” said Teresa Casazza, president of the California Taxpayers’ Association. “They simply mislabel new or higher taxes as ‘fees’ and then pass them with a lower vote. It’s time we close this loophole, make the politicians abide by our constitution and respect the will of voters who have made it clear through the ballot box that taxes must be passed with a two-thirds vote.”

“The way out of this recession is by creating jobs, growing the economy, and reducing the tax burden on hardworking California families and the businesses that create those jobs,” said Allan Zaremborg, president of the California Chamber of Commerce. “Hidden taxes and higher fees work against job creation and make it even harder to recruit the businesses and jobs that are needed to re-energize our economy and provide the taxes to fund critical state services.”

“If we are going to attract jobs to California, businesses need the certainty of a stable tax structure, not the constant exposure to unending revenue gimmicks. Voters have said ‘enough is enough’ to higher taxes and fees and passage of this measure will help end the politicians’

deceptive practice of labeling taxes as fees so they can be passed with a simple majority vote” continued Zaremborg.

The Stop Hidden Taxes initiative is a constitutional amendment that simply and more clearly defines fees and taxes to close loopholes used by the Legislature to avoid the two-thirds vote requirement.

The initiative also applies to local governments, includes a provision to sunset any fee/tax increases not meeting the requirements of this measure enacted between the beginning of this year and the effective date of this measure if it is passed by voters, and prohibits the Legislature from using a simple majority vote to raise taxes on one group while reducing those on another group (the so-called “revenue neutral” maneuver now being considered by the Legislature).

The Stop Hidden Taxes committee is a ballot measure committee co-chaired by Allan Zaremborg and Teresa Casazza. The committee has begun collecting signatures to qualify the initiative (0093 – Taxes) for the November 2010 ballot.

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