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California Taxpayers' Association President Larry McCarthy Dies After Long Struggle With Cancer

Leaves 31-Year Legacy of Fighting for California Taxpayers

SACRAMENTO – Larry McCarthy, president of the California Taxpayers' Association since 1989, died Saturday in Sacramento after a long struggle with cancer, Cal-Tax Board of Directors Chair John Cmelak announced today.

“California’s taxpayers have lost a friend and ally,” Cmelak said. “For more than 30 years, Larry provided an effective, articulate voice for lower taxes and greater government accountability, and he did so with unmatched integrity and grace. His voice has been silenced, but his legacy lives on. Larry’s friends and colleagues at Cal-Tax send our thoughts and prayers to his wife, Sandy, and his entire family as we mourn the loss of a truly great man.”

McCarthy, who was 59, joined Cal-Tax as a legislative advocate in 1976, coming from Washington, where he had served as a government finance specialist for the Washington State Research Council. Early in his career at Cal-Tax, he wrote two editions of the *Citizens Guide to Local Government Budgeting*, and as research director, he supervised extensive research projects on local government finance in California, winning a national award for research on the use of benefit assessments in California after passage of Proposition 13.

He was promoted to president in 1989, and was responsible for the overall management of the organization and performance of information services, advocacy programs and policy research. From 1993 to 1995, he also served as chairman of the National Taxpayers Conference, a nationwide organization of state taxpayer associations.

As the leader of the state’s oldest taxpayer-rights group, McCarthy participated in a number of successful statewide ballot measure campaigns that strengthened taxpayers’ rights and protected Californians from unnecessary taxation.

Privately, he was a man with a deep religious faith who worked with his church and a local assisted-living facility to ensure that residents would receive Holy Communion at the facility if they could not travel to church.

In 2006, he was diagnosed with an aggressive form of skin cancer. Through much of his illness, he continued to work on behalf of taxpayers.

“Larry worked tirelessly to make California a better place, but even during tough political negotiations, he kept his amazing sense of humor,” Cal-Tax Acting President Teresa Casazza said. “Larry truly cared about this state and his friends, family and colleagues. We will miss him dearly.”

Cal-Tax has set up a tribute at www.caltax.org, along with an online guestbook for those who would like to share thoughts and memories.

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