

Remembering Larry McCarthy (1947-2007): Cal-Tax President Eulogized as Effective Leader, Man of Integrity



Cal-Tax President Larry McCarthy was laid to rest December 8 at Lakeside Cemetery in Folsom, following a funeral Mass at the Divine Savior Catholic Church where he was remembered as an effective, compassionate leader whose personal integrity and relentless optimism made him a role model in the community.

Mr. McCarthy, who joined the California Taxpayers' Association in 1976 and had served as its top executive since 1989, also was remembered fondly by friends and colleagues on a memorial website established by the association at www.caltax.org.

"Larry was a man of deep religious faith, and he viewed his illness as an emotional and spiritual journey that brought him closer to his family," Cal-Tax Acting President Teresa Casazza said. "It is that sort of selfless, inspirational outlook on life – and death – that made him such a special person, and that now makes it so difficult to say goodbye. This world could use more Larry McCarthys. We will not forget him, or his 31 years of remarkable service to the California Taxpayers' Association. He was a man of honor, graciousness, and integrity."

"I have always appreciated Larry's integrity and leadership ability," wrote former Cal-Tax President Dick Simpson. "However, as I remember him now and in the future, I am just as likely to think of him as a person who showed uncommon respect for others, who evinced a great joy and wonder with simply being alive, and who made any contact with him a pleasure and a positive experience."

In an obituary in *The Sacramento Bee*, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger said, "Larry was a true leader in the state who will be sorely missed. His continued vigilance in watching the state coffers was a benefit to every California taxpayer."

Selvi Stanislaus, executive officer of the Franchise Tax Board, wrote: "Larry touched all of us who knew him through his passion, his knowledge, and his humor, which brightened many FTB meetings. Browsing his online tribute photos, I can't help but smile. Each photo reveals Larry's passion and humor. Whether a mustachioed young man posing in front of the tax code, or smiling with the Governor, Larry was always professional and knowledgeable."

State Controller John Chiang said, "Larry's contributions are many and invaluable. He has left a great legacy."

State Board of Equalization Chair Betty Yee noted that Mr. McCarthy leaves a "legacy of unwavering advocacy for California taxpayers," and BOE Member Bill Leonard said, "His work helped millions of hard-working people, and he is missed." BOE Member Michelle Steel, writing in her newsletter, called Mr. McCarthy an "iconic figure in the anti-tax movement," and added: "Larry McCarthy was one of California's preeminent tax policy experts, and Larry made sure

that he used that expertise to strengthen taxpayer rights and defend Proposition 13. Larry dedicated his life to serving taxpayers, and his legacy will long endure."

Jon Coupal, president of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, wrote: "It is so easy to become cynical in politics and the environment in Sacramento often reflects that negativity. But there are a few extraordinary individuals who rise above the often petty disagreements and who handle themselves with equal measure of grace and professionalism. Larry was (is) one of those individuals. A man of the highest integrity, he will be sorely missed."

Dominic Calabro, president of Florida TaxWatch, called Mr. McCarthy "a big brother to the leaders of our 30-plus state taxpayer research institutes" – a statement that is true in a literal sense, as well, as Mr. McCarthy's younger brother Kevin is president of the Arizona Tax Research Association.

Mr. McCarthy died December 1, less than two weeks before his 60th birthday, after battling cancer for more than a year. The oldest of nine children, he was born in Los Angeles and graduated from Crespi Carmelite High School in Encino. He earned a bachelor's degree in government from St. Martin's College in Washington. Prior to joining Cal-Tax, he worked for the Washington State Research Council, a taxpayer-advocacy group.

He is survived by his wife of 34 years, Sandy, and their three children, Steven, Michelle and Christine. The family requested that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to [World Vision](#), an organization that provides aid to the poor.