



The Times

The tax revolters are watching the lawmakers

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STAFF WRITER

The tax revolters tell me they are watching the way our lawmakers are voting, especially on spending issues. They say that New Jerseyans, and really most of the American public, feel severely overtaxed and worried that the current level of government spending will eventually result in even higher taxes. But, they note, voter sentiment may be enough to change the leadership.

"Look, it's not that hard to understand," a tax revolter would say. "We can't pay any more taxes. Let me say that again: We can't pay any more taxes. We pay too much already. Add up the Social Security, federal and state income taxes, sales tax, property tax and all of the hidden taxes and we find that we are working four hours a day for the government and only four hours for our families. It has got to stop.

"And the way to stop it," the tax revolter continues, "is to stop spending money we don't have. Let me say that one again, too: Stop spending money we don't have."

Tax revolters claim that this sentiment was instrumental in Gov. Christie's victory in New Jersey and U.S. Sen. Scott Brown's victory in Massachusetts. They also claim it will be instrumental in this November's election, nationally and, especially, here in New Jersey.

"Our current elected lawmakers," the tax revolter notes, "think they can just spend and spend without regard for where the money is coming from. They have been paying government workers up to 50 percent more than what is paid in the private sector. To make matters worse, they have a pension system in which an employee works for 20 years or so and then collects a pension for the next 30 or 40 years. That not only has to stop, it has to be reversed.

"But we are watching. At election time, we are going to look at all of the votes that each elected official made. And the legislators who voted to spend money irresponsibly will be voted out of office quicker than they can say 'Jon Corzine.' I can promise you that.

"Look at some of the recent questionable actions," says the revolter. "The projected state deficit is in the \$8 billion to \$10 billion range. We can't raise taxes under any circumstances, but they are worried about how such a huge gap can be closed through spending reductions only.

A recent statement by Gov. Christie has made them a bit nervous. It was recently disclosed that the state's unemployment fund is about to run out of money. Gov. Christie said the federal government will cover the shortfall, but if that doesn't happen, he will have to raise unemployment taxes on state employees about \$1,000 per employee. I don't think that will sit real well with the tax revolters.

"You are darn right it won't. I don't know how else to say this. The lawmakers have to understand that we will not pay any more taxes. If that means tough cuts in spending, then you will just have to live with it."

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