



The Issue: Voter Approval Requirements for Higher Government Spending

Background:

From 1990 to 2008 Texas **state government spending per person** grew 148%.

Local governments have also increased spending at an unsustainable rate growing 4 times faster than our incomes. Between 2001 and 2008, **county spending** alone has increased 61%. *This does not include spending by cities, school districts, municipal utility districts and hospital districts.* By comparison, Texas taxpayers' per-person income increased just 34%.

As a result all local governments in Texas have increased debt at an alarming rate, growing 5 times faster than Texas' income. Local government debt has increased by 95% from 1999 to 2008. According to the Texas Bond Review Board, local government debt as of August 31, 2008 is calculated at \$97.7 Billion in tax-supported debt. Local government debt is so large that the interest rate alone in one year is equal to what all local governments spend on police and fire protection combined.

Current Party Position:

The **Republican Party of Texas** platform includes this issue under "Fiscal Responsibility". It currently reads: *"Fiscal Responsibility – We urge state and federal legislators to reduce spending. ... We also support a "cap" on government spending at all levels, with adjustments based only on average family income and population change."*

The **Libertarian Party of Texas, Constitution Party of Texas, Green Party, & Democratic Party** platforms do not include this issue.

Proposed Party Platform Language:

BE IT RESOLVED, that every government body in Texas should be required to limit any annual increase in its budget and spending to the combined increase of population plus inflation unless it first gets voter approval to exceed the allowed growth.

Signed:

Who we are: Americans for Prosperity (AFP) is a nationwide organization of citizen leaders committed to advancing every individual's right to economic freedom and opportunity. AFP believes reducing the size and scope of government is the best safeguard to ensuring individual productivity and prosperity for all Americans. AFP educates and engages citizens in support of restraining state and federal government growth, and returning government to its constitutional limits. For more information, visit www.americansforprosperity.org