

April 25, 2011

Governor John Kasich
Riffe Center, 30th Floor
77 South High Street
Columbus, Oh 43215-6117

Governor Kasich,

We are encouraged by your work as Governor to promote a friendlier economic environment for Ohio's family business owners, family farmers, and their many employees. In particular, we are encouraged by your efforts to eliminate the Ohio estate tax which is a major obstacle to the survival of family owned businesses and farms.

While it is certainly true that serious reforms like eliminating the death tax present short-term challenges, they are necessary steps towards leaving a legacy of economic prosperity in Ohio and promoting job creation from the most productive sector of the economy – family businesses. Ohio's low exemption of only \$338,333 causes wealthy and even middle class taxpayers and job creators to leave the state. For those that continue to operate in Ohio, the looming death tax burden ties up their working capital in expensive estate plans and life insurance policies.

Voters in Ohio gave complete control of the Ohio legislature and the Governor's office to the Republicans to make hard choices and serious reforms. A broad coalition of organizations foundational to the Republican base supports repeal and grass roots activists have collected over 84,000 signatures in support of repeal. The repeal bills, HB3 and SB90, have been passed out of committee with overwhelming support of Republican members.

The conditions for repeal will never be as favorable as now. We are concerned about recent statements by Senate leadership indicating a reluctance to bring SB90 to the floor for passage, but we are confident that with your leadership this reluctance can be overcome. Many winning candidates' top tax issue, and a key pillar of your pro-growth platform during the 2010 election, was promoting the complete repeal of the Ohio state estate tax. With control of the Governor's office and state legislature in republican hands, now is the time to push forward to swiftly eliminate the Ohio estate tax.

Your fight to end Ohio's death tax is also important on the national level as the repeal of the Ohio state estate tax will likely lead to a domino effect of states abolishing their state estate and inheritance taxes. Currently, 12 states have legislation offered to do away with this unfair levy. When polled, nearly two-thirds of Americans favor completely eliminating the death tax. Voters see the levy as an unfair double tax on America's job creators. We strongly encourage you to push forward now and insist that the Ohio state legislature pass legislation before summer recess to eliminate the Ohio estate tax.

Please contact us if we can be of assistance in this crucial effort.

Sincerely,



Grover Norquist
President, Americans for Tax Reform



Dick Patten
President, American Family Business Institute



Tim Phillips
President, Americans for Prosperity



Duane Parde
President, American Taxpayers Union

