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Market values down but tax bills up? Confused?

Many of you have written to tell us that even though your property value has decreased and the local real estate market is stalled, your assessor has nonetheless increased your assessed value, and your proposed property taxes for 2011 has skyrocketed.

Over the last decade, market conditions and cuts to Local Government Aid (LGA) have created the perfect storm for property taxes, nearly doubling the statewide burden. Forest land and lake shore have been hit particularly hard. Many on fixed incomes are being pinched, and are barely hanging on.

This Christmas we received the following heartbreaking message. It echoed so many others we have received recently that with Karen's permission it is reprinted here.

Happy Holidays everyone!



"Just wanted you to know that our cabin (Half Bay) on beautiful Lake Vermilion, Tower, MN, has been for sale for a number of months. We have lowered the price the last time now to \$399,999. If it doesn't sell for that price, the bank can have it."

The tax value is \$750,000+. It has 300' of shoreline and 31 acres of land. Please pass the word on to friends and acquaintances.

I was happy to share it with those of you who had the opportunity to go up there. I had had 62 wonderful years there. I'm very sad to lose it but, as we all know, life goes on (after a few tears).

Thanks and the best to you and yours this beautiful snowy holiday!

Karen"

Take Grassroots Political Action

The time for half-measures, gimmicks and stalling is over. We must reform our state and local fiscal system.

A number of bills have emerged that will help address transparency. Other bills offer creative ways to raise revenues for schools without further burdening property owners and payees. And finally, we are working to bring taxable values and market values into alignment. The goal is to stop the erosion of our educational system while restoring some fairness to a system that has spun out of control.

Use the e-mail form below to write your legislator and ask them to support the following bills:

[House File, HF 244 \(Davids\)](#) Costs and attorney fee payment provided in certain court actions to level the playing field with local taxing districts.

[HF 385 \(Dettmer\) SF 246 \(Vandever\)](#) Limited market value growth limits for property taxation -- LMV should have never been phased out. Since tax assessments are based on comparable sales, and since in most areas there have been few sales, they are paying property tax on value that no longer exists.

[HF 435 \(Dittrich\)](#) Minnesota's permanent school trust land independent authority created for management, supervision, and administration. School trust lands are contributing to the benefit of our local schools. Estimates are that with proper management they could be contributing more than a hundred million dollars annually. Instead, under DNR management, most of the proceeds are lost to bureaucracy.

[Follow](#) the School Trust Land debate on Facebook.

Grassroots political action does bring about legislative change. We must engage and write our legislators so that our voices can be heard above the din of special interests in Saint Paul.

It is important that you contact the legislators where you live and vote. If you do not live in Minnesota but have relatives or friends that live in Minnesota, please pass on this information to them and ask them to contact their legislators.

Another way to bring about change if you live out-of-state is to write the local newspaper where your cabin is located. [Use this link.](#)

Handwritten letters are the gold standard of grassroots activity. Phone calls, reach your legislator, are also very effective. If you don't have the time, e-mail the quickest. Every contact made, whatever the method, helps our cause.

For legislator mailing addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses and sample visit our webpage.

Take a moment and write, call or e-mail them today. Be brief, respectful and It is best to use your own words. Or simply send the e-mail below.

GET INFORMED! GET ACTIVE! GET RESULTS!

[CLICK HERE: Ask your legislators to help.](#)

If your legislators' name and e-mail addresses are blank, it is because we do not have your Minnesota address information (where you live) or because you are not a Minnesota resident. Please e-mail us your street address, city, and zip and we will be able to include your legislators' information in the future.

Thank you for your passion and activism. Please keep in touch.



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