



For Immediate Release
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Public Wins with Defeat of TABOR in Wisconsin

Madison – The interests of Wisconsin citizens were served with the sound defeat of the Taxpayer Protection Amendment (TPA) in the State Senate on the evening of May 4th.

“There are three very important lessons to be taken from the sound defeat of TABOR in Wisconsin,” argues John Keckhaver, Research Analyst at the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families.

- 1. The more that people – both legislators and the public alike – found out about TABOR and what it specifically would mean for us in Wisconsin, the less they liked it.**

Despite the slick and simplistic packaging of TABOR as a pro-taxpayer measure, Wisconsin residents started asking serious questions and when they came to understand the impacts it could have here, they spoke out loudly against it.

There are things people in Wisconsin value: community protection, the services at their curb, our strong education system, health care, an agricultural industry that promotes safety and the family farm, economic development and infrastructure, services for the elderly and children, our parks, lakes, and our roads. These things make Wisconsin a great place to live and the public came out in support of continuing to invest in them.

- 2. The underlying assumptions to TABOR were shown to be incorrect or highly exaggerated.**

TABOR proponents used funny math when talking about the tax burden on businesses, the size of government here, and whether state and local governments spend too much. TABOR actually provided a great opportunity to expose some of these myths and to begin to have a real discussion of what we get for what we pay for. In this way, TABOR has been a blessing in disguise.

- 3. The defeat of TABOR represents a win for public involvement and input.**

Despite the fact that very few public hearings were held, and in fact, for some of the versions that were voted on, NO public hearings were held, the public came out in force on this issue. Thousands of phone calls, emails, and postcards were sent to legislators over several months on this issue. Citizens asked serious questions, gave their input, and were heard.

“It’s also important to realize that a anti-TABOR position isn’t necessarily a pro-status quo position,” added Keckhaver, “there are serious problems that we face in this state, it’s just that TABOR would not have helped solve those problems, in fact, it would have taken us in the

wrong direction on health care, on workforce development, and on real tax relief for those who need it the most.”

*The Wisconsin Council on Children and Families is a state-wide, non-partisan, non-profit advocacy organization celebrating our 125th year: **Raising Voices to Make Every Kid Count***