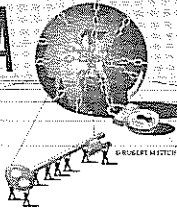


COMMON GROUND-USA



1118 Central Avenue
Beloit, WI 53511-5407

Return Service Requested

GROUND SWELL

WE NEED A LAND VALUE TAX (from page 15) natural resources). For those homeowners who do own property and are hard-pressed to pay, there is another option, called deferral, wherein the Ground Rent (aka: Land Value Tax) would only be collected upon sale of the property.

Arbitrarily capping the property tax will be a disaster equal to that of proposition 13 in California, which single-handedly brought down the most prosperous state, while providing taxless windfalls for large landholders like the oil & gas industry. Furthermore, a cap on taxes forces up prices, and promotes sprawl while taking away funding for education. Ideally, we should only pay a Land Value Tax, and no tax on buildings or other improvements. For more information, please see www.urbantools.org and www.commongroundnyc.org.

Our group's alternative proposal, still under development, is to eliminate taxes on all productive activity, and charge 8%/year on assessed values of Land instead. Then, the state will free up underused land (22 square miles in NYC alone, according to the NYC Department of Finance) for productive purposes, end the land speculation that is responsible for the current economic crisis, and produce more affordable housing.

This revenue-neutral proposal will attract new businesses and prevent flight of existing businesses.

Land, unlike manmade capital, is finite, generally increases in value wherever location and population pressures

are applied, and is the single leading cause of booms and busts in the financial cycle (there really is no such thing as a "business cycle"). Whereas capital, like buildings, can always be increased or decreased to suit market demand, land cannot. Therefore, the value of land belongs to the community that created it, to be collected via taxation, while the value of the buildings upon it are production, and belong to those who produce them.

This idea was most eloquently described by Henry George in his best-selling economics opus, "Progress and Poverty" (1879), but also found expression in the writings of Thomas Paine, Ricardo, and even the Old Testament.

On behalf of all New Yorkers and not just the special Land-holding speculators, please enact a Land Value Tax, and rescind the property tax cap before it does irreparable harm. Already, a lawsuit has been filed to repeal the property tax cap, suggesting as an alternative to consolidate municipal functions across towns and cities. But this only delays the inevitable collapse from a broken system. We need to look elsewhere for revenue. We need to look beneath our feet.

See our petition here: <http://www.change.org/petitions/replace-property-tax-with-ground-rent> and a more New York City-centric petition here:

<http://www.change.org/petitions/tax-vacant-unused-land-to-return-its-value-to-the-community> that would tax vacant land at the same rate as built-upon land, and force it into production! <<

PRSR. STD.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BELOIT, WI
PERMIT NO. 16