

June 2, 2009

Howdy, Friends O'Farley...

This will be very brief (although I understand that Proust's Remembrance of Things Past would be considered brief compared to yesterday's Farley Report)...

As you have read, the Governor released her budget yesterday. She presented it herself to those of us in House and Senate Democratic leadership yesterday at around noon, and it sounded no better in person than it reads on paper.

While there are some reasonable elements, and its spending provisions are superior to the legislative Republican proposals, Governor Brewer includes some huge hits to the future of our state. Here are a few:

1) She asks voters to repeal Prop 105's protections of voter initiatives from Legislative raids, and forces every voter-approved initiative since 1998 to go back on the ballot for re-approval in 2012, whether or not the proponents have the funding to mount a campaign. These voter-approved programs include health care for poor kids, inflation funding for K-12 education, and early childhood education.

2) She enacts TABOR (the so-called Taxpayer Bill of Rights) to put strict inflation and population growth limitations on government spending, an experiment that has wrought disaster to state budgets in Colorado. Ironically, at the same time as she tried to sell us this bill of goods, she revealed to us that - in May alone - more than 31,000 new people joined our state's health care program for those in poverty, AHCCCS. That will incur state costs that are much higher than inflation and population growth. TABOR would outlaw additional spending to deal with such a crisis, spurring more catastrophic cuts.

3) She seeks \$1 billion in a temporary 1-cent sales tax increase which would make us more dependent on the unstable and decreasing retail sales base, then remove that source entirely, leaving us in a hole in three years, even if it a) gets on the ballot and b) is approved by voters, neither of which is likely. This would help her to pay for massive corporate tax breaks and the eventual elimination of the education equalization property tax, effectively shifting a huge part of the tax burden off of corporations and onto middle-class families.

If you hear some nice-sounding talking points from unexpected places about Governor Brewer's budget proposal, please invite the presenter to look under the hood of this seriously misguided plan, and instead consider a plan that would really set this state in the right direction, the joint Democratic plan at <http://www.StrongerArizona.com>.

Thanks for staying aware and being involved!

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