

Amendment 2 would take Louisiana in the wrong direction



In November 2024, at Gov. Jeff Landry's request, the Louisiana Legislature cut state income taxes for individuals and corporations, eliminated a tax that is mainly paid by large, profitable corporations, and raised the state sales tax so that Louisianans now pay the highest sales tax rate in the country.

These changes left the state with fewer resources for programs and services, and cemented a regressive state tax structure where people with low and moderate incomes pay a higher effective tax rate than the wealthy.

During that November session, legislators also approved a 115-page bill that rewrites the section of the state constitution that governs taxes and spending. These changes require voter approval in a statewide election on March 29, where it will appear on the ballot as Amendment 2.

However, there are serious issues with the way Amendment 2 was created and how it is being sold to the public.

Amendment 2 eliminates important state savings accounts that fund critical education and transportation programs, and would tie the hands of state and local policymakers in making tax and budget decisions.

Specifically, Amendment 2 would

Create an artificial "growth limit" that restricts what legislators can budget each year for ongoing programs. This could force the state to cut funding for the day-to-day operation of state government, such as public schools, health care services, and other programs that support families and communities, even when it's available to spend.

Raid and/or eliminate state savings accounts, including a rainy-day fund that voters set up a few years ago to fund transportation projects; and two education trust funds that help pay for early childhood education, K-12 schools, and research at our public universities.

Take Louisiana back to the budget gimmicks popularized by former Gov. Bobby Jindal, where one-time dollars are used to pay for ongoing government expenses.

Take power away from ordinary people - who voted to protect important funding streams from politicians - and give more control to the Legislature.

There are serious issues with the way Amendment 2 was created and how it is being sold to the public

Process

This amendment was created during a rushed, 20-day special session in November and put on the ballot for a vote in March, a month not usually used for state elections.

Complexity

The bill that created Amendment 2 is more than 100 pages long, but what voters will see on their ballots contains less than 100 words. It's impossible to capture the full effect of such a complex bill without omitting key elements.

Misleading language

The teacher pay "raise" mentioned in the ballot language is actually replacing a stipend that public school teachers are already getting, so teachers' overall take-home pay will not change under this amendment.

Bottom line

People and businesses look for more than low taxes when deciding where to live and work. They also look for places with great schools with high-quality teachers, accessible early education for their children, and good public infrastructure – things that our tax dollars pay for.

Amendment 2 makes it harder for our leaders to address the real problems that face Louisiana - roads and bridges and other infrastructure in chronic disrepair, K-12 schools and college campuses that are underfunded, and health care that is unaffordable or inaccessible for too many people.

**Amendment 2 would take
Louisiana in the wrong direction**