

Dear Senators,

It is hard to imagine as a small business owner of 30 years that the Democratic leadership would even consider raising taxes without a public hearing. As a minimum all our elected officials have a clear fiduciary responsibility to provide notice and hearing when you are considering putting your hands in the pockets of Connecticut individuals and small business in the amount of almost 2 billion dollars. After looking at the letter in detail, and looking at the specifics of which tax increases are being proposed, it is clear who is being targeted for tax increases...small business owners, many of which are single proprietors!

I'm not sure what universe these taxes are prudent in, particularly in a State where the cost of doing business is the highest in the nation. From my experience of three decades, and gauging the current "on the street" real economic conditions, the pain and suffering caused by the greatest recession since the Great Depression has still not returned to pre-recession levels and it will be years before the State's economy returns to some semblance of "normal". Why would the leadership even consider making the business climate in this state more costly, challenging, and unfriendly? You don't punch the patient in the stomach when he's just come out of the hospital do you?

This is not a Democratic or Republican issue, this is a common sense issue. Just when the economy is showing signs of marginal improvement for small businesses and individuals, the notion of increasing taxes is at best absurd, and in the least irresponsible governing. It will force small businesses to increase their costs to the small businesses and individuals they serve and essentially drive business and opportunity out of Connecticut. Never has the middle class been under such intense assaults, mean wages are down, with most individuals having not received a pay increase in years.

To use the rationale that "hard decisions need to be made" to balance the budget cannot be used to increase taxes in such an irresponsible way. Where is the same fervor to cut unnecessary spending, provide incentives for both existing small businesses and creating a climate that supports and encourages new business? Where is the stalwart dedication to look for waste, consolidation, reduction of unnecessary regulations that hamper business? Where is the relentless pursuit of business friendly incentives, and economic development strategies to bring new businesses to Connecticut instead of the steady trend of companies exporting to other states?

Individuals and small business should not be the low hanging fruit to tax. Sure we are easy to see, easy to grab, and are enticing. But there are other choices....maybe you just cut down on eating so much fruit and save the tree! The two things that are certain in life, death and taxes are now reversed....it is now taxes and then certain death from a thousand little paper cuts called taxes!

I would invite you to come sit in my chair for a couple of weeks where you will see how difficult it is to operate a business in this state. We don't need additional challenges in Connecticut, we need more opportunities, a better climate, and relief from the seemingly ever reaching hand into our pockets.

Sincerely,

John R. Longo



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