

From: TR Jahns
To: Meeting Info
Cc: Reguindin, Joemil
Subject: [External] Issue for board to consider
Date: Monday, August 23, 2021 8:48:15 PM



PUBLIC COMMENT

From: T.R. Jahns
Agenda Item: C1. Taxpayers' Bill of Rights Hearing
Meeting Date: 08/24/21

Hello,

I heard most of an interview on KVCR with Chairman Antonio Vazquez regarding issues to be discussed in the board sessions this week and seeking input from the public. I want to pass along the following comments and a suggestion for the Board of Equalization to consider. I'd appreciate having this brought up during your session on Tuesday or Wednesday, and I'd welcome any response from Mr. Vazquez or others regarding what I'm presenting here.

I realize the Board of Equalization is not a legislative body. But I understand that the Board could raise an issue of importance and encourage the governor and the legislature to create legislation to address a real need of property owners.

I believe county tax collectors are given some statewide rules or guidelines regarding how they handle annual property tax increases in the counties. I suggest that those rules be expanded to include additional factors beyond current assessed property values when setting or annually increasing property tax on individual properties within their jurisdiction.

In particular, I think that a property owner's annual income should be considered along with issues like age range and other unique factors that may affect a property owner's ability to pay for property taxes. The goal would be to reduce the tax burden on those who are retired, on fixed income or have low income while trying to hold onto their homes. This can be restricted to those with a single home or property and one in which they reside, and can allow for the county to do a reassessment of the property tax should that person receiving special allowance sell the property.

Having tax increases only consider current assessed property value is unfair. It fails to take into account other factors that involve ability to pay due to restricted income or assets. That's why I believe there should be options for property owners to seek some relief in the form of discounted tax assessment or similar compensations.

This special allowance would be calculated using certain strict guidelines regarding the property owner's annual income, age, and other factors that might create a burden on the ability to sustain annual property tax increases. I recommend a formula or method of calculation be created to give home owners a chance to seek special allowance to keep property taxes affordable.

I realize the main objection to such an allowance would be the fear of revenue loss, which would then impact the ability of counties to fund essential services including schools. However, I think the guidelines for qualification for such an allowance could be sufficiently strict to limit the number of property owners who would qualify. The guidelines could include annual income limits, years of ownership, property values in the area of residence, percentage increase in property values from the previous year, and the indebtedness of the homeowner in the form of existing loans. In any case, if property taxes are sufficiently burdensome that they impact the homeowner's well-being or ability to even stay in the home, some form of tax relief is the right thing to do.

I urge you to raise this issue and suggest that the legislature or the governor take up this need with appropriate legislation. I will be passing along my ideas to my state legislators as well.

Thank you for considering my input.

Regards,

T.R. Jahns
Hemet, CA

