

Republicans *have a*

TAXING **Problem**



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A MOVEMENT WAITING FOR A MESSAGE



Across Ohio, a quiet rebellion is brewing inside the Republican Party. County. GOP groups are breaking ranks, rallying around a grassroots mission to abolish property taxes—while the party's handpicked favorite for governor, Vivek Ramaswamy, tours the state promising to end income tax instead.

It's a clash that cuts to the heart of Ohio's identity: will Ramaswamy respond to the revolt rising beneath his own base, or will he become another polished candidate who mistakes campaign applause for real connection?

Vivek has the time to pivot and address this consequential problem. Will Vivek listen and respond to the voter's call as Trump once did—by defying both parties, rejecting the machinery of politics, and re-writing the Republican play-book?

Ohio's Attorney General, now out of the governor's race, has publicly admitted, given the chance to vote, Ohioans will end property tax.

Ohioans are as angry as I've ever seen them - and rightly so," Yost told the Ohio Council of County Officials. "These inflationary tax increases are hurting everyone and, in some cases, are forcing people out of the homes they worked their entire lives for."

Across the state in 2024 and 2025 the average increase was 32% for property taxes. 2026 will have the remaining 13 counties reappraised and 28 counties updated. 41 counties are getting ready to experience what the other 47 counties have already experienced. Extreme pain with an average of 32% increase in property taxes.

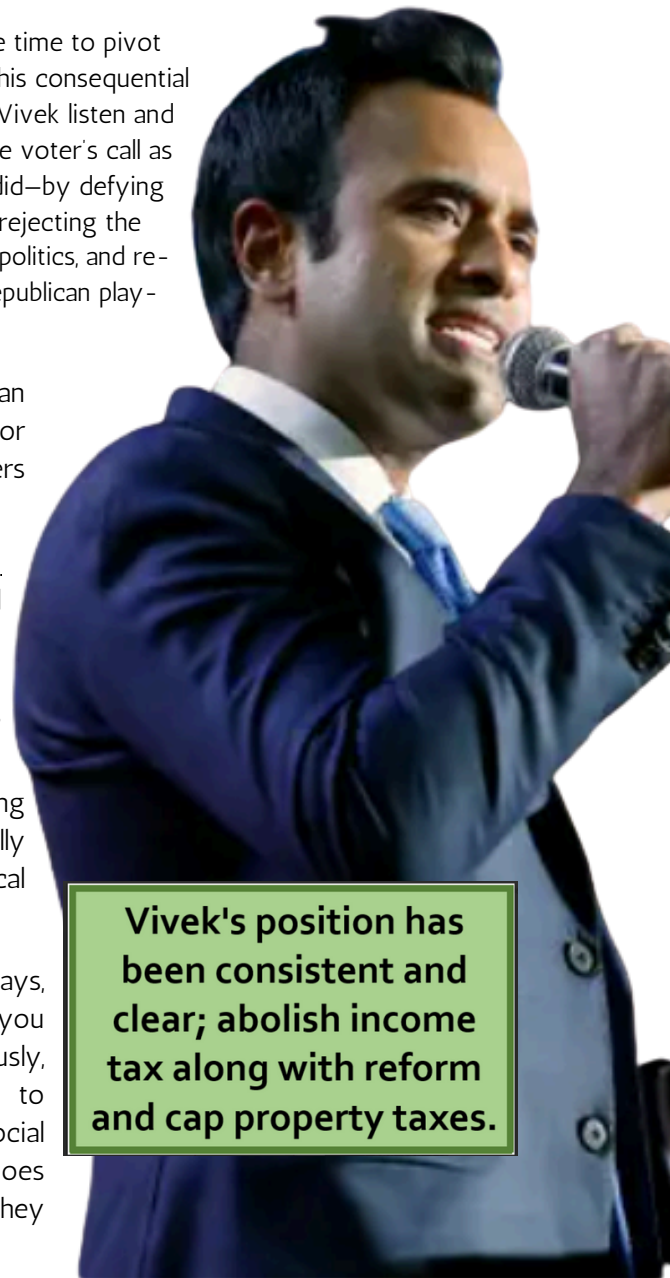
Greg Lawson with the Buckeye Institute reported the Ohio GOP has been working on cutting incomes taxes for over two decades.

This focus is evident in the Republican governors, representatives, and major PAC's such as the Koch brothers American's for Prosperity.

In 2012 the Buckeye Institute[1]. stated "Here at Buckeye,... we would like to see a discussion of how Ohio can continue to lower it's income tax rates with its eventual elimination as a goal."

The Party bosses have been working on a plan which has systematically shifted the burden to local governments via property taxes.

"End income tax", Ramaswamy says, because "It's your money and you deserve to keep it." Simultaneously, people are losing their homes to property taxes, and taking to social media decrying their increase. Does Vivek believe it's their home and they deserve to keep it?



Vivek's position has been consistent and clear; abolish income tax along with reform and cap property taxes.

Ohio's Tax Crisis

Abolishing income taxes sounds good, eliciting cheers from the crowd of hopeful hearers seeking a governor who they believe has their best interests at heart. But this quote resonates with marketing painfully close to a JD Wentworth commercial. "It's your money, use it when you need it."

Campaigns are built around identifying and solving a problem. But fixing hard problems creates uncertainty, causes fear, and makes people uncomfortable. Voters generally don't vote for someone who will make life uncertain and confusing. Voters like smooth, predictable, and comfortable.

Vivek is not the first politician to create a problem they can easily fix. He has chosen to spin up the discomfort of income taxes to a painful frenzy while offering a solution he can easily secure and every legislator can rally around. The manipulation creates talking points and easy solutions without doing any **consequential work that may cost them votes**.

Voters will have to decide if Vivek is sincere in fixing a real problem or merely a suave snake oil salesman offering same-stuff-different-day solutions to a non-problem the Republican machine has been grinding out for decades.

Cost of living concerns, including housing, are serious problems in both the 2016 and 2024 GOP Platforms

Grand Old Party what say you?



When private property is not secure, freedom is at risk.

ACCORDING TO THE GOP PLATFORMS, Republicans have a high value in lowering taxes and shrinking the federal government in favor of more state, local, and individual responsibility. Including:

- Pursue Tax Cuts
- Stabilize the Economy by slashing spending and promoting growth
- Promote Home Ownership
- Lower Everyday Costs to drive down the cost of living
- Ensure seniors can live their golden years with dignity.

In short, housing affordability and security is good. Out of control property tax is bad; very, very bad.

GOP endorsed Ramaswamy is careening head on into local GOP organizations eagerly working to end property taxes by supporting the constitutional amendment to abolish all tax on real property in Ohio.

This citizen led grassroots effort known as Ax Ohio Tax has people circulating petitions all across Ohio many with the help of county GOP committees.



Above: Members of Project Promise distribute AxOhTax signs throughout Portage County, marking the launch of their grassroots campaign to end property taxes on March 6, 2025.

Local Republicans are responding as their community's cry for relief. The question remains if Vivek will respond in kind, or do what has always been done – go for the deep pockets.



Republican Party tents at county fairs had petitions to sign but hid them away when Vivek came to visit.



Above: A Project Promise petition signing at Octane Nights—one of many signing events the group hosted this year as it led the movement to end property taxes in Portage County.

Property Tax is linked to state tax revenue. To cut income taxes you must pull back on the size of government or make the services someone else's problem. Part 2 of this series will review the implications of cutting income tax at the state level.

[1] <https://www.buckeyeinstitute.org/blog/detail/three-ohio-think-tanks-agree-on-need-for-tax-expenditure-reform>

[2] https://damassets.ohio.gov/image/upload/tax.ohio.gov/taxeducation/history/taxation%20in%20ohio_history.pdf

[3] <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2024/econ/stc/2023-annual.html>

[4] https://ohioauditor.gov/trainings/docs/2018/Understanding_how_Local_Government_Funds_are_Distributed.pdf

[5] <https://businessjournaldaily.com/ohio-bills-aim-to-ease-financial-burden-for-family-caregivers/>

Elayne Cross has spent the last twenty years working in various political positions while writing and podcasting along the way. Her work focuses on cutting through political theater and exposing the performative side of power on both sides of the aisle – always in pursuit of truth and accountability for the everyday citizen.

