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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Property Tax Relief – Yes; TP Amendment – No**

Municipal officials are disappointed that state legislators continue to focus on inserting revenue limits on local governments in the state constitution rather than providing real property tax relief to home owners.

Municipal officials share the Legislature's concerns about high property taxes. "Local officials are on the front lines of the property tax issue and are particularly concerned that homeowners bear 70% of the property tax burden in this state," said League President Doug Oitzinger, Mayor of Marinette.

The League opposes the TP Amendment and other efforts to insert taxing and spending limits on local governments in the constitution because:

- It won't result in property tax relief.
- It locks in all of the inequities and unfairness of the current system.
- It undermines Wisconsin's tradition of representative democracy.
- We are not equipped for direct democracy and the conduct of referendums will prove expensive and inefficient.
- It will be difficult to modify the limitations in the future and impossible to respond quickly to emergencies.

The League believes there are better ways to lessen the residential property tax burden, including:

- Working with local governments to develop and enact proposals fundamentally reforming how local government is structured and financed in this state.
- Reducing the number and scope of property tax exemptions created for special interests. Increases in property tax exemptions have unfairly shifted more of the burden for paying for municipal services onto homeowners. In 1970, residential owners paid 50.6% of all property taxes in Wisconsin. Today, homeowners pay over 70% of the total property taxes.
- Providing municipal officials with the flexible tools they need for controlling property taxes locally.
- Increasing state funding of shared revenue.

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“The TP Amendment makes good bumper sticker politics and provides a topic for discussion on talk radio but it won’t provide property tax relief,” stated Mayor Oitzinger. “That will take a lot more work to accomplish and I urge state legislators to join us in working towards that common goal.”

Oitzinger added “It is imperative that this latest TABOR proposal receive extensive public hearings across the state so that every opportunity for input is afforded the public and there is no rush to get something passed because it's an election year. After all, we're talking about changing our constitution.”

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