

Wyoming Taxpayers Association Spending Policy Statement



Wyoming Taxpayers Association (WTA) advocates public policies that make sense for a healthy Wyoming economy. Since 1937, the WTA has provided the essential connection and has been the information source for the State's taxpayers and policy makers. WTA is committed to promoting a strong, sustainable, fiscal policy for the future of the state of Wyoming.

The *Cornerstones of Taxation*, *Exemption Criteria* and *Tax Criteria Matrix* were developed to guide policy makers as they protect taxpayers from excessive government spending. Influenced by historic efforts of the association, WTA will continue to educate with concise and updated information for our members and public policy makers specifically regarding how their tax dollars are being spent.

The executive and legislative branches have recognized that ***the state's tax structure is in a permanent state of imbalance***. The two branches largely supported the work of *Tax Reform 2000 Committee* and implementing many findings and recommendations. Yet Wyoming has experienced more busts than booms and now the fiscal crisis before the state is none like we have ever seen. Despite investing over \$2 billion dollars in economic development and growth, elected officials at all levels of governments have collectively ignored the inevitable and can no longer offer the services to which voters have become accustomed.

The time to address the "nice-to-haves" and focus on the "must-haves" is now.

WTA Spending Policy: *WTA recognizes the duties of state and local government per the Wyoming Constitution should be the absolute priority:*

- Education
- Regulation of water, mining, and corporations
- Conduct of elections
- Infrastructure/Public Works
- Care for the indigent
- Judicial system
- Public safety
- Construction and improvement of roads and highways

WTA believes that spending policies should be narrowly aligned with the duties set forth in the Wyoming State Constitution. Refocusing on these priorities will help to reverse the burden and rebuild Wyoming's Fiscal House.