

## Brockton groups rally to defeat state income tax elimination

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**BROCKTON** — They say eliminating state income tax would lead to drastic cuts in local services

They're fighting for taxes and looking for public support.

The Brockton Interfaith Community and the Coalition for Social Justice, members of the statewide Coalition for our Communities, are kicking off a campaign against Question 1, a binding referendum on the Nov. 4 ballot to abolish the state income tax.

A public forum to defeat Question 1 will be held at 6:30 tonight at the Messiah Baptist Church, 80 Legion Parkway.

"This is an opportunity for people to get educated and get on board," said Janine Carreiro, spokesman for the group.

The referendum, if passed, would wipe out the state's 5.3 percent income tax over two years, cutting it to 2.65 percent on Jan. 1 and then eliminating it totally on Jan. 1, 2010.

The Committee for Small Government, a proponent of the measure, says a family would save an average of \$3,700 per taxpayer. "Money to keep, to spend for family, retirement or charitable contributions," the group says.

The Committee for Small Government also says the state would have \$12 billion less to "waste, misspend, hand out in pork-barrel projects or use for big government programs."

That sounds good, said Carreiro, "but, in actuality it's not."

Opponents of the measure say, if passed, it would be devastating.

"The result would be to take \$12.7 billion — nearly 40 percent — out of the state budget," the Brockton-based anti-Question 1 campaign said in a prepared statement.

"This will drive up local property taxes and fees and lead to drastic cuts in services," the group said. "Our communities would suffer sweeping cuts."

Tonight's meeting in Brockton will feature some 20 people from the community who work with organizations that may be hit by cuts that would result from the loss of income tax revenue, according to Carreiro.

From the meeting, she said, Question 1 opponents will work with voters to get their message out in signs, bumper stickers and calls.

A similar proposal to eliminate the state income tax — also sponsored by Libertarian Carla Howell and the Committee for Small Government — got 45 percent of the vote in 2002, according to the Massachusetts Municipal Association.

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