

Commission on Property Tax
Public Engagement Meeting - Pueblo, CO at Colorado State University- Pueblo
Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 8 2024

5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Zoom Recording:

https://keystone-org.zoom.us/rec/share/iSomX9rm4U-TOROGVyiQhAgH5EYUJIQz5Mx8BeV7MdlK3hvinfs_pTXZTa8qW2zoZ.KVS3Xp90Z7cAA7FF?startTime=1707438645000

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5:30 PM: County Commissioner Lori Lakse and Commissioner Bob Olme provided opening remarks. Trace Faust introduced the Keystone Policy Center. They also electronically polled the attendees to gather demographics and affiliations. Polling results are captured in Addendum A. Afterwards, they displayed a powerpoint to provide background of the Commission, including its guiding principles.

5:42 PM: T. Faust facilitated a conversation about the challenges around property tax. Attendees voiced challenges with a lack of local control, an inability to plan, a lack of stability, accountability, a lack of a funding safety net, rising costs, insufficiency of sales taxes, recruitment of fire fighters, competition between special districts, hard decisions on cutting services, the uniqueness of each district, and a changing legislative landscape. There was a conversation about the perspective of the guiding principles.

6:20 PM: T. Faust facilitated a conversation about solutions around property tax. Attendees voiced smoothing, local control, impact fees, releasing sales taxes, fluctuating mills, solutions that are predictable but not exactly the same every year, civic education, and solutions that do not legislate home values.

7:20 PM: T. Faust thanked the group for sharing their input. Commissioner L. Laske invited further feedback. T. Faust also asked for further comments via the electronic survey.

[Addendum A](#)- Mentimeter Results

[Addendum B](#)- Participant Input

Property Tax Commission Attendance:

Lori Laske

Bob Olme

JoAnn Groff (online)

Ann Terry (online)

John Cappelli (online)

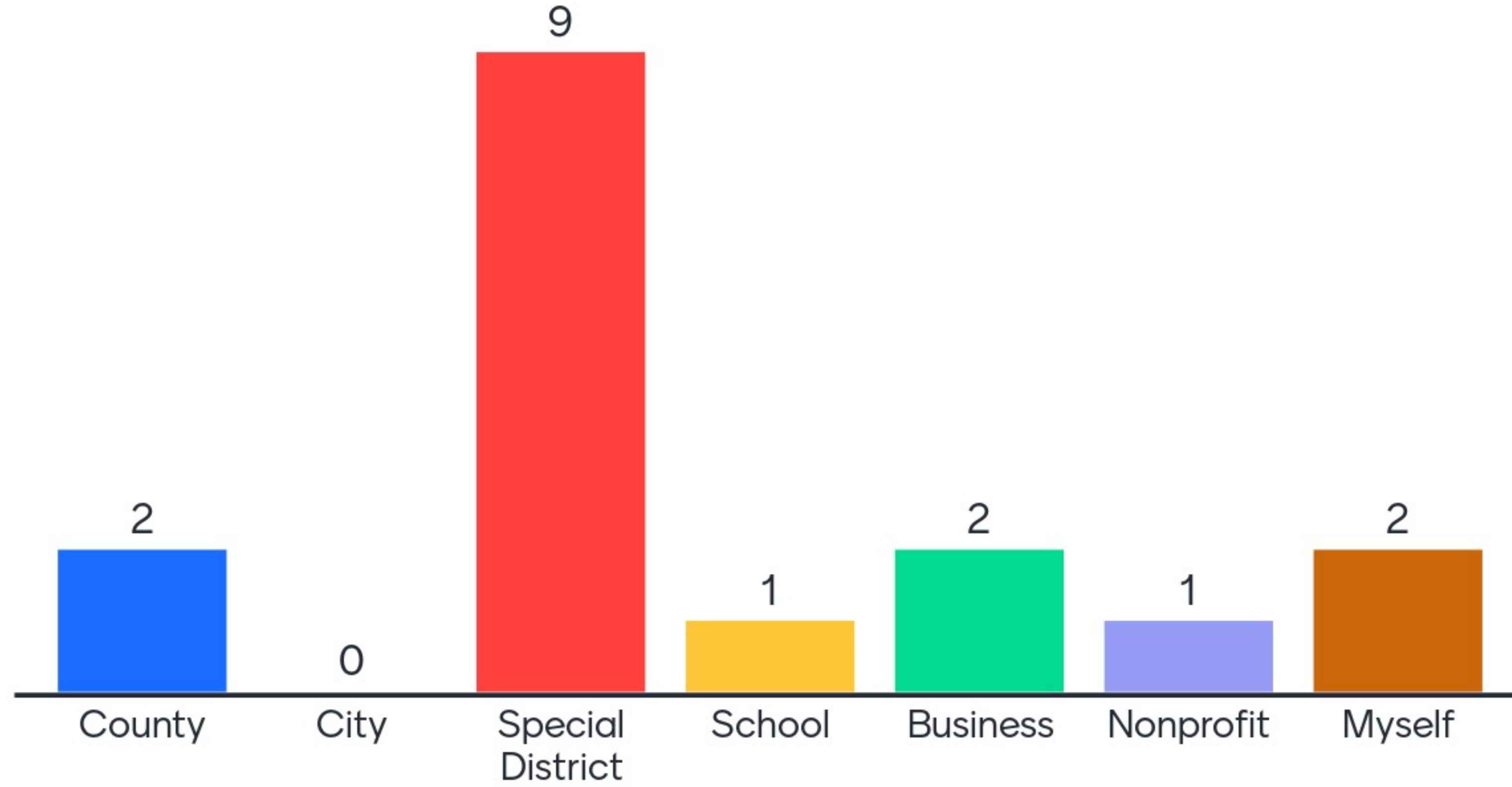
Brendo Dones (online)

What county do you live in?

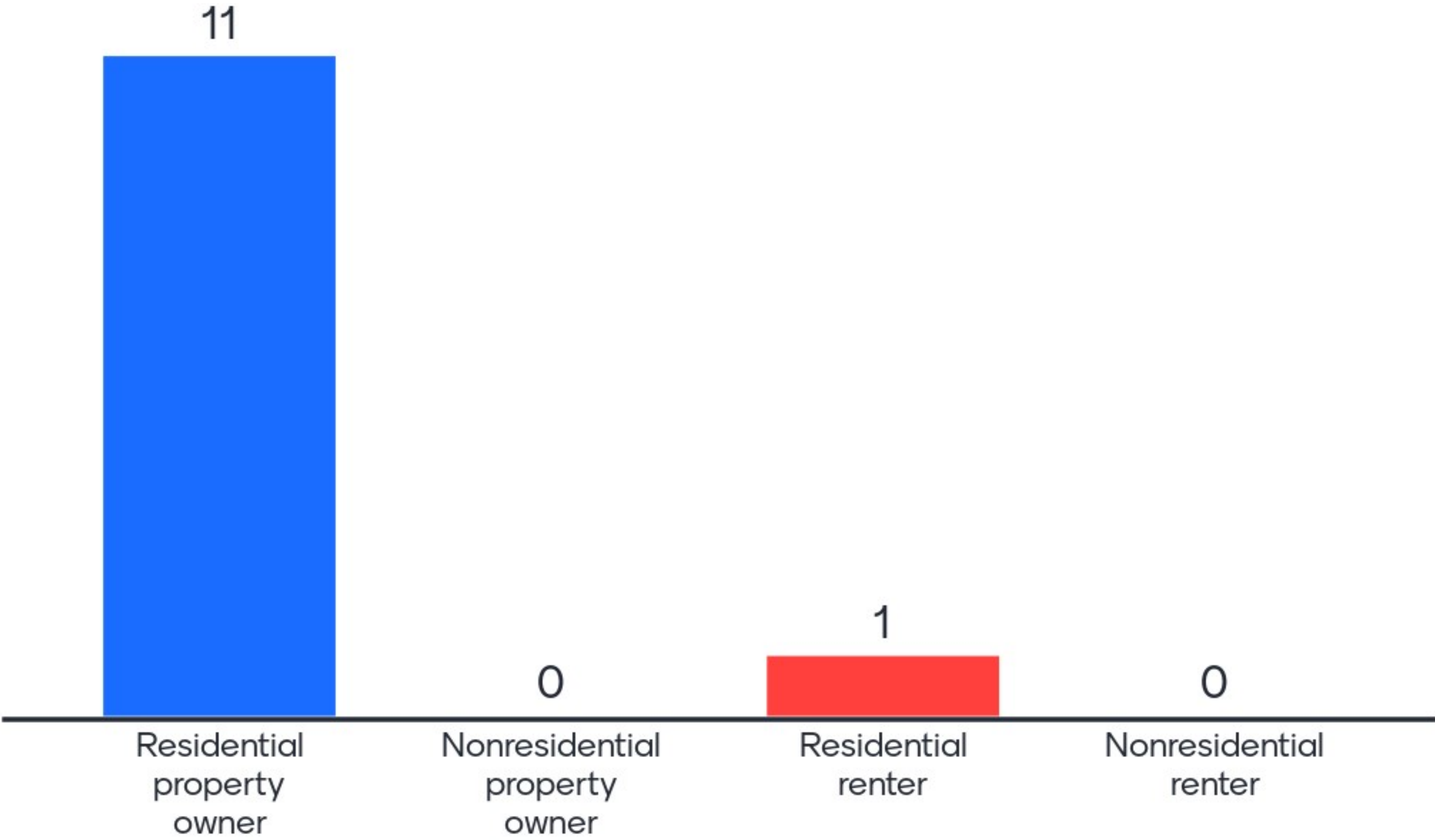
16 responses



I am here for:



Select all that apply



COUNTIES

What are your suggested solutions?

What's your unique challenge? What are your top priorities you'd like the Commission to be considering as they look at recommendations?

Valuation is not the issue.

Gallagher was a bad idea from the outset. It was a shell game. But it became law and we learned to deal with it. Repealing it does not change tax revenue.

Reduce state power. Each county has unique demands and challenges. The front range and western slope are vastly different.

We need to be able to serve our communities, so we still need appropriate revenue

Totally agree with the comment to the left

Every state ballot issue that incentivizes circumnavigating TABOR/ Article X, Section 20 of the Colorado State Constitution is in fact UNCONSTITUTIONAL and should be

nullified on constitutional merits alone. They are all illegal.

WHY tax businesses at all? Businesses do not pay taxes- they are forced to be conscripted tax collectors for government. Every penny of tax paid by businesses was taken

from consumers.

We need to be able to give different rates to different types of owners

Local Control is a top priority

We need a steady revenue stream so we can forecast our budgets

We need a solid plan that we can rely on for several years. All of the uncertainty is making planning difficult.

Increase Homestead exemption and make it available to all primary homeowners that have owned 10+ years. Eliminate the age restrictions. NOT for STRs

Veteran Exemption, regardless of disability status

Like the idea of giving a break for primary residential and taxing second homes and STRs at a higher rate

Zoning issues are for local communities to decide. It isn't a state issue. Density should be controlled at the local level.

push for more transparency with taxing entities and their budget process. Especially metro districts

Property tax making housing even LESS affordable.

We need to find a good solution for taxing STR owners appropriately

CITIES

What's your unique challenge? What are your top priorities you'd like the Commission to be considering as they look at recommendations?

**Valuation
is not the
issue**

**Bedroom
communities in this
state are dependent
on sales taxes.
Without a big sales
tax base, building
more housing can
be a financial drain
on the community.**

**We need more
housing, but
the incentive
structure is
wrong.**

**Difficult to
plan when
rules are
constantly
changing.**

What are your suggested solutions?

**Need stability in
revenue streams.
Local control.
Revenue should =
expenses associated
with delivery of
service and not
artificially capped**

What's your unique challenge? What are your top priorities you'd like the Commission to be considering as they look at recommendations?

SCHOOLS

What are your suggested solutions?

Communicating with our constituents that they fund our schools. But yet they don't when the State "equalizes" the funding with their formulas.

Being sensitive to people who want to fund their local schools, yet also are funding other things. Total mills do matter to taxpayers.

Challenge: laws changing at the last minutes that affect valuations, levies and asks.

Not all schools can be equally funded by locals due to the tax base. But the state equalization (funding from the state) is a funky formula that 90% of people even understand.

Schools have an outsided public policy influence in this state which is not warranted when their educational results are terrible & money isn't fixing the problem.

Valuation is not the issue

Basic education on what a local government is and does to people. Local government directly affects the community's lives... yet they don't understand.

Robust basic education on property taxes. It needs to reach various ages & demographics. Be offered at various times (n the same community).

What's your unique challenge? What are your top priorities you'd like the Commission to be considering as they look at recommendations?

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

What are your suggested solutions?

Each taxing entity has unique financial forecasts and financial lifecycles. A one size fits all approach does not work and threatens to vilify us against our taxpayers.

(continued) Defend our decisions with our taxpayers while under pressure to reduce revenue from Governor, Senator, local politicians, etc.

Our Revenue and mill rates are our service agreement with our taxpayers and we budget to weather difficult times assuming balance during bull economies...

(continued) the injection from state legislation disrupts our ability to budget effectively and plan responsibly.

Lastly, the state needs to demonstrate some sensitivity to timeframes and costs required to adjust to legislative measures (e.g. attorney expenses, personnel hours, budget cycles).

Aging infrastructure requires a MASSIVE investment to update an entire community. The only alternative is ever increasing water & sewer rates or new sources of tax revenue.

When inflation happens, we need to ensure that we can continue to pay our bills and provide wages for our staff to be able to live

Rising costs of capital, employees, durable goods, supplies.

End annual changes by the legislature. They are chaotic.

Special Districts need to be responsive. In resort communities, our assessed values are a roller coaster.

As a library district, property taxes are about 98% of our funding. We don't have the capabilities to charge for our services.

Create better balance between residential and commercial rates.

when property values rise, the service levels are expected to also be at a higher level. So, more revenue is required to server communities with higher values.

If the concern is to support low income and fixed income individuals, target efforts to them w/o changing the entire system.

Short term rentals should not be treated/ taxed the same in all regions/ communities. Many resort communities are purposefully build to support short term rentals to drive

tourism economy.



Target relief to individuals, if needed, possibly through income tax credits.

Keep things local. Temp. mill levy credit as prescribes by SB 23-108. Acknowledged that each area of the state is different and have different needs. Instead of property taxes try to revamp

income tax rate (state).

It is challenging to conspeculate a solution for a state wide commission when the clear and general concerns is that the solutions should be left to the local elected boards

and their constituents.

Don't lock in a capped increase of growth (max of 4% or similar).

Ensure special districts can save some funds to cover the down turns in our economy without cutting services.

Allow local control through vehicles like SB 23-108.

Homestead 45/55

Avoid formulas.

Focus accountability on revenues, not rates or formulas.

Property tax policy should remain with local government and their constituents.

Continue to provide incentives for local communities to develop workforce housing. Work w/ counties, municipalities & spec. districts.

Leave it alone! Free market economy. The state didn't offer reimbursements to Special Districts during the subprime mortgage crisis, nor did we go to our taxpayers to offset...

(continued) the property tax losses during this period. Where are our disparate populations that are truly affected by a 50% property tax increase? Fixed and low incomes...

(continued) low income are rental housing not paying property taxes... so fixed income.

Enable fire districts to pursue other forms of voter approved taxes.

Tax relief funds people not state.

What's your unique challenge? What are your top priorities you'd like the Commission to be considering as they look at recommendations?

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

What are your suggested solutions?

HOUSING

Fire districts have only one source of revenue which is property tax.

Tax system feedback: One size fits all. No mechanism to address real time change. Seems to be very able to decrease but not increase.

Recited equality across different service delivery.

Adjustments to assessment rates affect the only source of revenue for fire districts.

Region/areas of the state are impacted differently. One solution won't equally solve everyone's situation.

Fire districts cannot plan for capital and operational needs when legislator adjusts assessment rates.

Property taxes represent the hopes of communities. Keep the state and legislature out of these local matters.

Cost of living in the mountains make it difficult to attract & retain employees.

Valuation is not the issue.

Towns imposing TIFFS which limit our funding.

Special districts can enrich initial developers and leave long-term residents holding the bag on a lot of debt.

Housing. Inability to provide local housing for employees. Equipment cost up 30% year over year.

Honor local votes. Keep decisions local.

How do we eliminate state government from having influence over local property taxes?

Inflation. Deterred maintenance. Staffing challenges especially in the mountains. Employee housing or residential units for the employees. Increasing construction cost.

SRT tax won't results in the economic fallout ppl suggest. Increase income tax on highest earners. Increase regulation to stop business practices that shrink the

middle class & more wealth to the top 5%.

Early resolution or path forwards will alleviate challenge of uncertainty during budget season. Thinking of 2025 budgeting.

Tax SRTs are commercial or local taxes on lodging. Invite ppl other than special districts to the event. Tax rates are not the problem.

What's your unique challenge? What are your top priorities you'd like the Commission to be considering as they look at recommendations?

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

What are your suggested solutions?

Lack of local employees causes a staffing crisis in emergencies and closed interstates.

Taxing authorities are obliged to collect ONLY as much tax revenue as necessary to pay their annual obligations, many of which are constitutionally dubious.

We were challenged with long-range capital planning & maintenance due to lagging prop. values in the past.



Residential

What's your unique challenge? What are your top priorities you'd like the Commission to be considering as they look at recommendations?

Challager removal was a sinister step to grab more taxes. Particularly for certain special interests i.e. schools.

No estimated valuation is legitimate, only actual sale \$ is.

Taxing authorities are reluctant to reduce mill levies even knowing they can increase them back without voter approval. Many "amendments" have been added that incre

How does the 5.5% annual levy law affect this potential tax hike? Ref. Section 29-1-301 CRS.

Property valuations- whether a 'comparable' property in relatively close proximity has sold sometime in the past 2 years is a meaningless and misleading metric.

Government should do less. Affordable housing is No part of the role of gov't. Don't make VR's problems OUR problems. Commercial businesses need employees,

My pay check doesn't go as far & my employer can't keep increasing my pay to keep up. Taxes, groceries and insurance all increasing.

Valuation is not the issue.

Voters need to be better educated that they will pay for optional programs eventually.

Don't try to discount or reduce values like Mark was saying. The increase in taxes come from the revenues collected by each tax entity. More accountability from the budget process.

Implement a bill called 'the Challenger Amendment'

Why are we talking about raising metro district levies? Why here? This is a ballot issue! WHY are we talking about employee housing?

Let them shoulder the burden.

Continually paying more particularly with assessment values rising yet schools in this state (in particular) are terrible & keep churning out poorly educated students at an ever

Residential assessments up 80% or more in one year. Unreasonable.

If housing the workforce is a priority, then offer a lower assessment rate to primary home owners and investors that rent to local workers. Vacation homes and STRs should be higher

Tax relief? Sell values are very high? Fear- end run TABOR- one size 'or' to pay look at communities abilities.

Flexibility when values fall- they will fall. Do not have categories for short term rentals equal protection under the law.

Why are we here? Is all of this not compelled by recent property values skyrocketing. We want to know if we are going to get screwed with a huge property tax hike.

increasing cost. BAD ROI.

Basing taxes on imaginary property valuations is not rational. That whole system needs to be abolished.

If housing the workforce is a priority, then offer a lower assessment rate to primary home owners and investors that rent to local workers. Vacation homes and STRs should be higher

Consider taxpayers

Create a legal framework to work upstream. Prevent profiteering on housing. New housing as a public good/utility.

What are your suggested solutions?

What's your unique challenge? What are your top priorities you'd like the Commission to be considering as they look at recommendations?

Non-Residential

What are your suggested solutions?

Equal protection under the law. 'Fair' is relative.

Commercial property & businesses take a big burden of property taxes in this state, but the system passes big rent increases a long to renters as a consequences.

Government interference.

'NO' one size fits all. Local-

What's your unique challenge? What are your top priorities you'd like the Commission to be considering as they look at recommendations?

**Valuation
is not the
issue.**

Misc.



What are your suggested solutions?