

- Civility
- Iowa’s Tax System – *Challenges & Opportunities*  
(Event: Wednesday, February 23, 7:30 AM; Greater Des Moines Botanical Gardens)
- Property Taxes
- Regional Water Discussions
- The TACI In-Basket

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### Civility

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**“You can’t insult someone into agreement”**

... Arthur Brooks on CNBC 2/16/2022

How many times have we witnessed discussions where, unable to get agreement on their position, an individual resorts to insulting the individual with whom they are engaged?

Lisa Swallow of Portland (a co-founder of “Crossing Party Lines”) was quoted in a February 1 Wall Street Journal article: **“One of the problems, she says, is that people nowadays tend to ‘listen to defend, not listen to understand.’”**

Why has responding with an insult (*That’s the dumbest thing I have ever heard... You must be a ...*), rather than reasoned thought, become standard? It certainly will not lead toward understanding and possible persuasion.

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**REGISTER TODAY!**

**FOCUS: Iowa’s Tax System – Challenges & Opportunities**

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**It’s the first “Funnel Week” at the Iowa Legislature.** That means bills introduced in one chamber must receive approval from a full committee in that chamber to remain viable. BUT, tax-related and spending bills are not subject to the “funnel” so the consideration of flat taxes, local option sales and service taxes, property tax credits, and State support of local public services (education, mental health, DART, DMACC, etc.) are still be debated.



Get the facts, in-person over coffee, not just the soundbites.

**EVENT: FOCUS: Iowa's Tax System – Challenges & Opportunities**

Wednesday, February 23, 7:30 AM - Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden  
Registration details below

**Presenting:**



Kraig Paulsen



Jared Walczak



Mike Owen

**Kraig Paulsen**, Director, **Iowa Department of Revenue**. Appointed Director in 2019 by Governor Kim Reynolds, the mission of the department *“is to serve Iowans and support state government by collecting all taxes required by law, but no more.”*

**Jared Walczak**, Vice President of State Projects with the Center for State Tax Policy at the **Tax Foundation, Washington DC**. He is the lead researcher on the annual *State Business Tax Climate Index* and *Location Matters*.

**Mike Owen**, Associate Director, **Common Good Iowa**. Mike coordinates fiscal policy work with other issue priorities at Common Good Iowa, advancing policy ideas that equitably and sustainably address the concerns of all Iowans.

**Registration:**

- **Individual Members** and those of **Member Firms – Complementary**
  - Register : [Admin@taxpayersci.org](mailto:Admin@taxpayersci.org)
- **Non-Members – Preregistered \$10.00**
  - [Register here](#)
- **Non-Members – at the door - \$15.00**

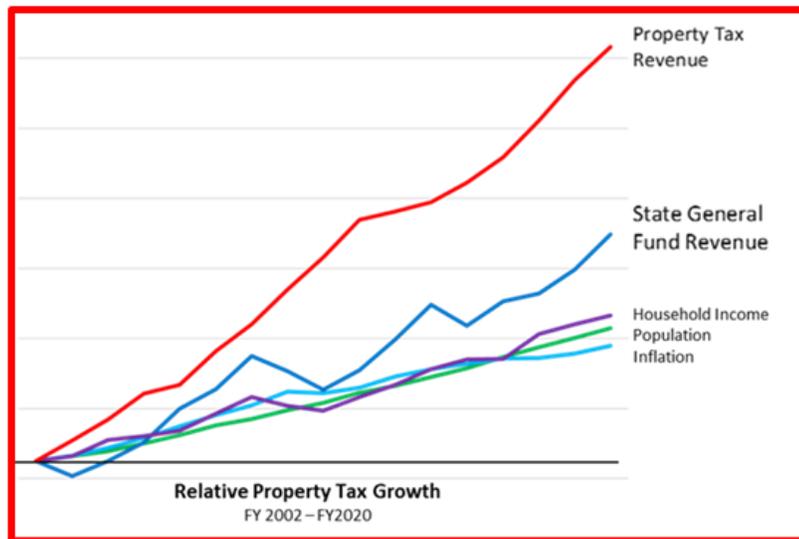
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## Property Taxes – Is the growth in collections sustainable?

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The challenge of balancing the public services needed to provide ***vibrant, just, central Iowa communities*** with the community's ability and willingness to fund them, is being discussed currently in Central Iowa council chambers, school board meetings and other property tax supported organizations.



By any measure, property tax collections in Central Iowa are growing at a faster rate than median household income, inflation, population, social security, and earnings. Consider the following chart:

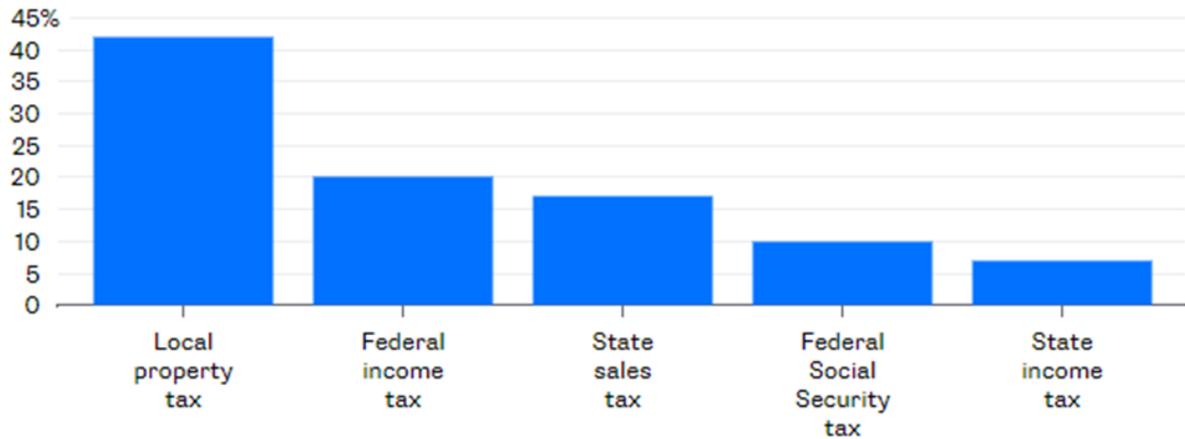
**The Association is not against taxes.**

**The concern: Is the increase in property tax collections necessary and sustainable?**

Comment from a TACI Topics reader --

“I am really concerned about residential property taxes for the City of DSM/Polk Co. and my capability to stay in my home ... Actually, my taxes increased 60% in one year and 11% the next... Thanks for your insights. I plan on attending the program at the Botanical Garden so I will better understand what is happening with the Iowa tax system. “

Polling by Gallup, Bloomberg, PEW, and various other organizations all come up with the same answer to the question:



## Which do you think is the worst tax – that is the least fair?

In 2019, **SF 634 Local Budget & Property Tax Transparency** was passed to address the issue. It applies to cities and counties but excludes schools.

**ANY** increase in property tax proposed to be collected requires a special public hearing and the public notice of that hearing shall include:

- This year’s total property tax dollars collected.
- Tax rate to generate SAME property tax next year.
- Amount proposed to be collected & tax rate.
- Justification for any increase.

**If the proposed property taxes to be collected are more than a 2% increase, a 2/3 majority is required to pass the measure.**

The Association is not aware of any property tax measure failing to gain the super-majority required when it came to a vote. NOW is the time to make your thoughts known!

### Town Hall: Regional Water Discussions



Our thanks to **Christina Murphy**, General Manager, West Des Moines Water Works, and **Ted Corrigan**, CEO and General Manager, Des Moines Water Works, their presentation regarding the proposed Central Iowa Water Works at the February 11, 2022 TACI Town Hall. The is being updated (please see below) to include the PowerPoint presentation and recording of the session. **Dale Acheson**, General Manager, Urbandale Water Utility, who has been working on the issue “for decades,” was unable to participate in person due to a trustees meeting.



Dale Acheson



Christina Murphy



Ted Corrigan

The next step will be to negotiate a 28E agreement between interested parties. If enough communities in the region agree to participate, the new utility could become operational by early 2023.

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## The TACI In-Basket

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**HELP WANTED** (Sound familiar?): The Association is looking for part-time support. If you (or know someone) who has “social media” skills, please let it be known. We are also looking for an individual who may assist with research activities.

### **WORTHY REFERENCES:**

*The Association receives a number of emails suggesting links to “reference materials.” Some are deemed worthy; some deemed not. If you have something that is educational, well-founded, and educational, pass it along. For example, the following was received from member Bob Riley, following a delightful conversation convened to discuss the polarities of “self-interest” and “common good.” (... more on that to be forthcoming!)*

“From missed school to mental health crises to lack of adequate day care, the coronavirus pandemic has disproportionately affected children. The upside is that the crisis has also provoked a reassessment of public policies to help them.

“Take a recent report from the progressive Brookings Institution and the conservative American Enterprise Institute, titled “[Rebalancing Children First](#).” The bottom line of the analysis: We need to start “rewriting the generational contract” to better invest in children.

“The report posits that major investments in the elderly (e.g., Medicare and Social Security) have put a serious dent in poverty among seniors — but have done so at the expense of children. ‘In 2019, the share of the federal budget spent on children was 9.2 percent and the share spent on the adult portions of Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid was 45 percent,’ the report states. ‘In 2020, the share of the federal budget spent on children fell to 7.4 percent even as total expenditures on children rose. ... This allocation is a statement of national priorities — priorities that the working group agrees need to change.’ ”

... Jennifer Rubin, The Washington Post, February 15,2022

Please email submissions to [Pres@taxpayersci.org](mailto:Pres@taxpayersci.org).