

Resolution: 2012-005 – Budget Referendum

Budget Referendum

A Resolution of the Utah League of Cities and Towns regarding referendum on budget items

WHEREAS: Cities and towns rely heavily on property tax dollars to fund municipal services

WHEREAS: it has long been held that municipal budget items were not referable; and

WHEREAS: the current state law, which requires compliance with “Truth in Taxation” and the associated meetings and notices, does not allow enough time to certify the tax rate, while still allowing for signatures to be gathered for a referendum; and

WHEREAS: the lack of sufficient time to gather referendum signatures and place the item on the ballot precludes the city from dealing with the referendum in the same election cycle as the proposed tax increase, thus forcing the city to collect the taxes with uncertainty about whether the citizenry will vote to overturn the tax increase, and

WHEREAS: the current signature gathering requirements for a municipal referendum on budget items are excessively low, allowing for a small fringe group to have a debilitating impact on municipal budgeting and provision of services; and

WHEREAS: This level of uncertainty and confusion on the budget will negatively impact the city’s ability to provide the municipal services their citizens expect.

NOW THEREFORE: be it resolved that the Utah League of Cities and Towns petitions for this Resolution to: work on a legislative solution to address the signature gathering requirements and the timing of signature gathering requirements that more appropriately dovetail into the current timing of truth in taxation, notice, and collections of municipal taxes.