



# Creating a Comprehensive Budget Communication Plan



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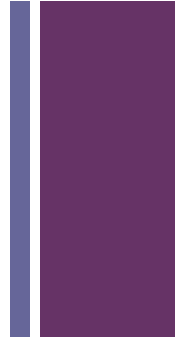
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Syntax



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# + Our 6 'Givens' in 2012 and Beyond

## Under the New Tax Cap Rules

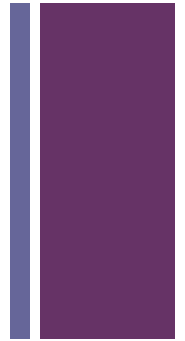


- Voters – and others – don't yet understand cap ramifications.
- The cap 'helps' your communication.
- Using the Governor's populist language ('your money,' 'your choice,' etc.) will resonate with YOUR publics.
- The community must be engaged as your guide... AFTER you have created and communicated the baseline scenario of that year's tax cap reality. Asking for help in an information vacuum is dangerous.
- Early messaging is often the best option for your district.
- You will be accused of 'threatening' people. Don't let it stop you.

# + 6 'Big Picture' Factors to Consider

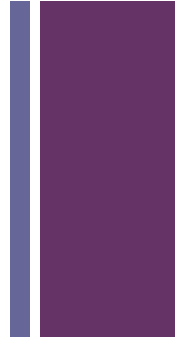
## ...in building a local plan

- Engagement of public – strategy, constituencies, timing, feedback mechanisms, responsiveness.
- Make 'messaging' a careful priority.
- Assess your voter activation ability and history. How do you positively impact the current turnout expectation?
- Assess the district's leadership profile for messaging (credibility and effectiveness). Exercise leader-to-leader contact.
- Execute good communication with your existing tools.
- Unleash the power of social media with 3<sup>rd</sup> party 'friends.'



# + Granular Execution

## of the 'Big Picture' Concepts



### ■ Engagement

- When to engage and how? Who should we be engaging?
- What will surveys tell us?

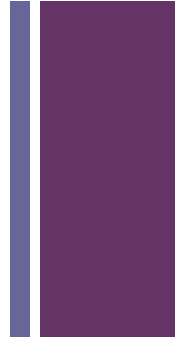
### ■ Messaging

- Stay away from 'blame.' Be matter-of-fact about the new 'rules.'
- Emphasize local control if you are attempting to exceed the cap ('you' and 'your.')

### ■ Voter Activation

- Trying to increase registration and turnout?
- Disaggregating chronic/itinerant voters with other demo info.

# + Granular Execution of the 'Big Picture' Concepts



- Leadership
  - Comprehensive grasp
  - Chief Advocacy Officer
- Conventional Communication
  - Use your web tools as the primary vehicle. Video, too.
  - Keep printed materials short, messages simple
  - Engage local media early, be wary of regional media view
- Social Media
  - It's time to encourage third party assistance.
  - Using Facebook, especially, to run third party support campaigns.

## + And Finally...

- If you aren't exceeding the cap this year, congratulations. In all likelihood, you will be successful. But that does not mean you can take your community's voters for granted. There are likely to be more than a handful of upset members of your 'natural constituency' for the cuts that you may have made to get to a tax cap budget. Good communication in this regard is very important!

