



Budgets and Taxes Toolkit: Sample Editorial

The following is an example of incorporating the framing research into the format of a guest editorial.

Our state's success is based upon the power of people working together, each in their own way. We all benefit when citizens work with the public sector to maintain our way of life through the careful stewarding of our public structures like community colleges, law enforcement or our highways. Our public systems must be stable if we are to guarantee that our citizens have a high quality of life that is the foundation of a healthy state.

The current economic downturn has created specific challenges that must be addressed for the state to prosper. Instead of postponing our response to fiscal problems, we should use our resources today to prevent them from becoming worse. When we postpone dealing with these problems, they simply continue to grow and cost more to fix later on.

It is important to remember that budgets and the taxes that support them are a system of forward exchange – we pay taxes forward, not for immediate exchanges for goods and services but so that we have them available in the future. In the same way, we have public goods and services now (schools, bridges, libraries, roads) because of taxes paid in the past. Trying to interrupt the forward exchange by cutting taxes or essential services now can leave beneficiaries in the future behind, both because costs will be higher and that meeting the increased need will be unaffordable.

Because the state budget is the instrument we have for planning for the fiscal future, the problems faced by communities are best solved by re-examining our state budget and having conversations about shared priorities. Our state's leaders made diligent and significant progress in developing a budget to address these unprecedented times. But more is needed. Budget cuts were made and are being implemented. Additional cuts will seriously damage our communities, and impair our citizens' ability to recover from the economic slowdown and move forward. We must work together to ensure that all children and families have a strong foundation for their lives and that our state budget reflects that priority.