

## Governor's panel to study inequities in property taxes

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. -- July 20, 2006 -- Gov. Jeb Bush appointed a 15-member committee Wednesday to make recommendations on how to curtail increases and remove inequities in Florida's property taxes.

The panel is intended to serve as a bridge between a Department of Revenue study of the same issues ordered by the Legislature and the Taxation and Budget Reform Commission that will meet for the first time in 2007 as required by the Florida Constitution.

Bush's panel will focus on property tax revenue increases that have exceeded the rate of personal income growth and unequal tax burdens created by the Save Our Homes Amendment voters added to the Constitution in 1992.

Save Our Homes limits tax increases on homesteads -- homes lived in by their owners -- to 3 percent annually or the growth in the Consumer Price Index, whichever is lower. That has shifted more of the tax burden to owners of newly purchased homes, second homes and businesses.

Retired Jim Walter Homes president and chief executive Don DeFosset of Tampa will chair the committee, which initially will meet no later than Aug. 15. It is to present final recommendations in late 2007.

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### **Property tax reform committee members**

All terms run through Dec. 1, 2007

- Donna Arduin of Fort Lauderdale, partner and president, Arduin, Laffer & Moore Econometrics, LLC
- Stephen Auger of Tallahassee, executive director, Florida Housing Finance Corporation
- Barney Barnett of Lakeland, vice chairman, Publix Super Markets, Inc.
- Don DeFosset of Tampa, retired, appointed as Chairman
- Bill Donegan of Maitland, Orange County Property Appraiser
- Representative Carlos Lopez-Cantera of Miami
- Charles Milsted of Tallahassee, associate state director, AARP
- Representative Dave Murzin of Pensacola
- Dennis Nelson of Wellington, Realtor, Keyes Company
- Senator Burt Saunders of Naples
- Cynthia Shelton of Lake Mary, Realtor, director of investment sales, Colliers Arnold
- Richard Spears of Orlando, retired
- Robert Turner of Tampa, Hillsborough County Property Appraiser
- Tony Villamil of Coral Gables, chief executive officer, The Washington Economics Group
- William Walker of Coral Gables, partner, White & Case, LLP

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