



County of Hamilton

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FROM: Dusty Rhodes
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RHODES WARNS OF TAX SURPRISES

Hamilton County Auditor Dusty Rhodes has warned property owners that their taxes could rise sharply next year beyond that created by any passage of tax levies.

"A combination of decisions made at different levels of government after Election Day could combine to drive property taxes higher in January," he said.

Rhodes said state legislators are considering the elimination of all or part of existing state rollbacks which currently reduce all property taxes by 10% with an additional 2.5% reduction on owner-occupied residences.

He predicts less of a stadium sales tax reduction next year from the County Commissioners. "In 2000 the stadium rollback was approximately 4.7%, last year it was about 4.5% and this year it dropped to just a little more than 3.9%," he said, noting the downward trend.

Rhodes said the City of Cincinnati council is expected to take away the reduction in charter millage which was given in 2000. "This amounts to another hidden tax boost on city property owners", he added.

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Finally, he said his office is completing a statistical update of property values which will be effective with January's tax bill.

"While the Tax Commissioner will increase the reduction factors for most voted levies, the new values will be sharply higher in some areas due to the booming real estate market over the past few years," said Rhodes.

"The inside millage (the first ten mills) is not subject to reduction and if property values are higher this part of the bill will increase," he said.

"The net effect of these decisions may well mean a higher property tax bill for many home and business owners regardless of the success or failure of proposed tax levies," he added.

"Of course the more tax levies that pass, the higher taxes will go. When voters see their tax bills a few months after passing levies reality hits them squarely in the pocketbook," he said.

Rhodes said the combination of factors could mean "significant" property tax increases for many in January. "They all add up, just like all the individual tax levies voters approve," he said.

He termed the fact that they all will be known only after Election Day as "perverse and most unfortunate".

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