

# Protect The Future

## Vote NO On State Question 744

### THE CATASTROPHE STATE QUESTION 744 WOULD CAUSE

The crippled state economy has left an estimated \$2 billion shortfall in Oklahoma's state budget. No job has been safe. No state service has gone uncut. Passage of SQ 744 would lead to an even greater budget collapse.

Even proponents admit, in the first year alone, SQ 744 would strip another \$800 million from all areas of state services. That amount would climb dramatically in the years to come.

State provided medical care for senior citizens and children would face massive cuts if SQ 744 is approved. State Medicaid spending would be dramatically slashed.

Crippling tuition hikes that would keep our children from getting a college degree are likely if SQ 744 passes.

Oklahoma's prison system would be forced to release thousands of criminals because of SQ 744.

\$800 million is more than Oklahoma spends statewide each year to repair all of our roads and bridges. Those repairs won't happen with SQ 744.

The ranks of inspectors who investigate abuse of the elderly in nursing homes would be decimated.

The number of child abuse investigators in Oklahoma would be dramatically reduced.

If SQ 744 passes, Oklahoma will face multi-million dollar lawsuits. Federal judges would take control of how our tax dollars are being spent – just like they did decades ago with Oklahoma's prison system.

SQ 744 would bring massive reductions in state funding for law enforcement agencies at all levels and would destroy rural fire departments and rural economic development programs.

### WHAT IS STATE QUESTION 744 & WHO IS BEHIND IT?

The Oklahoma Education Association put State Question 744 on our ballot.

SQ 744 masquerades as a financial windfall for our schools. In reality, it is a return to the corrupt government practice of earmarking our tax dollars. SQ 744 denies us, and our elected officials, the ability to control how government bureaucrats spend tax dollars meant to educate our children.

There is no guarantee that SQ 744 will ever provide a single penny to help increase teacher pay, buy more textbooks, or provide other classroom materials and equipment.

### WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT STATE QUESTION 744.

**Gov. Brad Henry** told The Oklahoman he opposes SQ 744. "I suspect right now that the initiative will not pass," (Henry) said. "If it looks like it has momentum and may pass, I may speak out more publicly than I already have." (*The Daily Oklahoman*, 1.27.2010)

**Lt. Governor Jari Askins** called SQ 744 "well-intentioned," but she said it would hurt other areas of education, such as early childhood and CareerTech. It would also erode dollars for higher education, putting more pressure on students, and tuition and fees would increase too, Askins said. (*Tulsa World*, 1.13.2010)

"As an Oklahoman, a mother and an elected official, I want to make our schools better and I want every child in this state to get a good education. Unfortunately, SQ 744 doesn't do that. What it does do is place an enormous unfunded mandate on the state at the worst possible time: right in the middle of a recession and a serious budget crisis. If it passes, public safety, transportation and virtually every state agency will be forced to take massive budget cuts to pick up the tab. That's not good for Oklahoma, not good for our children and, in the long run, not good for public education." **Congresswoman Mary Fallin**, (*One Oklahoma Coalition*, 3.12.2010)

**State Attorney General Drew Edmondson** (who opposes SQ 744) questioned whether the measure would be enforceable. Money to fund it would come from the budgets of other agencies, he said. (*Tulsa World*, 1.13.2010)

**Senate Pro Tem Glenn Coffee** called SQ 744 "One of the most dangerous things ever to go on the Oklahoma ballot. It's going to force incredibly difficult decisions if it were to pass," he said. "It would require significant cuts in the rest of state government with no easy ability to recover those revenues." (*Tulsa World*, 10.15.09)

"It would be devastating to the state budget," **House Speaker Chris Benge** said. "\$850 million is either going to be done by tax increases or cuts to areas like health care. And, it should be noted, that just because you're against 744, doesn't mean you're against education." (*Oklahoma City Friday* 1.29.2010)

### HELP ONE OKLAHOMA DEFEAT STATE QUESTION 744!

*One Oklahoma Coalition* is a non-partisan, diverse statewide association of individuals and organizations working together to safeguard the progress being made in our schools and across our state. *One Oklahoma Coalition* needs your help to defeat SQ 744. Contact us today for more information and to find out how you can protect Oklahoma's future.



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