

Sick and Tired of Campaign Promises

Steven Burns

It is the time of the year when many cities have their Mayoral Elections. In Attleboro, RI, *The Sun Chronicle's* front page headline is: "Elections Set, Voters Wanted."

The idea behind this headline is that they do not expect the voter turnout to be good. Why? Maybe the voters are sick and tired of hearing all the campaign promises that end up being lies. We have all heard them before. "If elected, I will not raise taxes." Ha-ha!!

I know that we need to pay taxes. The streets, bridges, and schools all need repairs. My problem is that politicians keep saying they won't raise the taxes, but then they do raise the taxes.

For this reason I have not and will not vote for any politician for any office. I know that some people will think that this is the wrong attitude, but I feel that politicians are crooks and liars and

are only in it for their own gains. I hope that some day I will be able to see an election that matters. It is not that I do not care, but I only want to vote if I think it will help the country or my state or my town. Some day, I hope I will be able to participate in an election that will make a real difference. But in the meantime, if the question is to vote or not to vote, my answer, for now, is not to.



Steven Burns quit high school at 17 and got married at 18. He and his wife had four children together. Since she passed away last year, he went back to get his GED, and he is hoping to continue his education.



"Read My Lips: No New Taxes" Learning more about a hot button issue

Taxes are a major issue in almost every campaign. Remember when George Bush promised not to raise taxes in his speech at the 1988 Republican National Convention? His famous line: "Read my lips. No new taxes" helped him win the presidency. But it was also a promise he could not keep.

Taxes are a hot button campaign issue. But who really understands them? Many acknowledge that we need public money for "streets, bridges, and schools," as Steven Burns does above, but many are also unhappy about the amount of taxes they pay. What are the principles that guide

taxation? What is progressive taxation, regressive taxation, and flat taxation? Who gets tax breaks? Occasionally politicians will talk about changing the form of taxation or implementing tax breaks, and many of us are not familiar with what they are and what the ramifications are for people with different levels of income.

Visit <www.nelrc.org/changeagent/extras> for a student-friendly lesson on taxes, including pictures, charts, and manipulatives. (Adapted from "Your Government, Your Taxes, Your Choices." The full curriculum can be found at: <www.mcae.net/curriculum/index.html>.)