

“A Taxing Benefit”

By
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US Representative Barney Frank from Massachusetts has filed a piece of legislation that needs your help to move forward.

#H.R. 5484, if passed, would exclude from federally filed gross income any real property tax abatement received under a State program or a local program in which the taxpayer receives such abatement in exchange for services. (This program is often known as the **Property Tax Work-Off or Municipal or Senior Incentive Program**).

The main objective of this program is to provide some property tax relief to struggling senior homeowners in exchange for their services. Among the various tax relief programs, the tax work-off program is unique in that it accommodates the needs of *all* its stakeholders (senior homeowners and communities). The seniors benefit from the program by receiving property tax relief and an opportunity to be productive in their communities. The communities benefit by receiving services cost-effectively, and retaining long-time residents (Dworak, 1982).

The Massachusetts Association of Council on Aging and Senior Center Directors' (MCOA) Property Tax Committee advocated effectively to Representative Frank's office to file this legislation. Massachusetts already exempts this “income” at the State level. We now need your help to educate your representatives about this program if it exists in your area, its importance, and why seniors shouldn't be taxed on a benefit for themselves and their communities.

Please contact your US Representatives (<http://capwiz.com/ncoa/dbq/officials/>) and ask them to co-sponsor Rep. Frank's bill #H.R. 5484. Please contact Jayne Colino (jcolino@newtonma.gov) for more information, to tell us how your connection with your Rep. went, and to share information about a Property Tax Work-Off program in your area.