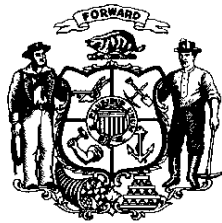


# THE STATE OF WISCONSIN

SENATE CHAIR  
**ALBERTA DARLING**

317-E Capitol  
P.O. Box 7882  
Madison, WI 53707-7882  
Phone: (608) 266-5830



ASSEMBLY CHAIR  
**DEAN KAUFERT**

308-E Capitol  
P.O. Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53708-8952  
Phone: (608) 266-5719

## JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

For More Information Contact:  
Senator Alberta Darling  
Representative Dean Kaufert

April 14, 2003  
(608) 266-5830  
(608) 266-3796

### **DOYLE BUDGET PLAN WOULD INCLUDE PROPERTY TAX HIKES**

Newly Released Statistics Reveal Almost Certain Tax Increases For Wisconsin's Homeowners

**MADISON . . .** Despite promise after promise to not raise taxes, Governor Doyle's budget proposal would force homeowners into footing a near double-digit increase in property taxes, according to Senator Alberta Darling (R-River Hills) and Representative Dean Kaufert (R-Neenah), the Co-Chairs of the Legislature's Joint Committee on Finance.

"I understand Governor Doyle has consistently said he didn't create this budget problem," said Kaufert. "However, the Governor also pledged to fix it without tax increases."

Newly released numbers from the non-partisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau estimate the average state homeowner will see up to a 9.5-percent increase in their property tax bill in the 2003-04 fiscal year. Darling and Kaufert say their top priority will be to lessen the impact of the Governor's tax increases. Both are fearful Doyle's budget proposal paints a bad picture for Wisconsin's homeowners.

"The combination of \$600-million in new fees and \$500-million in property tax hikes means taxpayers will have to pay more than \$1-billion to balance Governor Doyle's budget," Kaufert said. "I am very concerned about people's ability to pay this much and what affect it will have on the state's economic growth."

The Legislative Fiscal Bureau found that if local governments choose to offset their state aid reductions with increased property taxes, Governor Doyle's budget proposal would dramatically increase Wisconsin's property tax levy. Statistics show property tax levies would grow over \$640 million or 9.45% to \$7.42 billion dollars in 2003-04, and by \$573 million or almost 8%, to \$8 billion in 2004-05.

"These numbers are disturbing in that they reveal the extent of the property tax increases our Governor has put in his budget," said Darling. "The Joint Finance Committee is determined to keep the best interests of the property taxpayers in mind as we begin improving on what has been given us."

The Joint Finance Committee is expected to meet next week to begin voting on Governor Doyle's 2003-05 budget proposal.