

## SEPTEMBER 3, 2014

On September 3, 2014, a second symposium on the personal property tax in Wisconsin was held in Room 412 East, State Capitol. Following opening remarks from Chair Stroebel, attendees heard from seven speakers who shared various perspectives on this topic and answered questions posed by the steering committee for the symposia series. The following people spoke to the committee and other attendees:

Scott Drenkard, Economist and Manager of State Projects, Tax Foundation.

Matt Gardner, Executive Director, Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.

Curt Witynski, Assistant Director, League of Wisconsin Municipalities.

Lee Turonie, Legal Counsel and Lobbyist, Wisconsin Towns Association.

Tom Larson, Vice President of Legal and Public Affairs, Wisconsin Realtors Association.

Michelle Kussow, Vice President - Government Affairs and Communications, Wisconsin Grocers Association.

Joseph Pickart, Shareholder, Whyte Hirschboeck Dudek S.C.

Mr. Drenkard began his presentation with a brief description of the Tax Foundation, noting that the Foundation's principles include support of tax simplicity, neutrality, transparency, and stability, and pro-growth tax policies. He described the Foundation's assessment of the business tax climate in Wisconsin, shared some examples of other states' efforts to repeal or phase out personal property taxes, identified negative attributes of personal property taxes, and provided options for the attendees to consider to improve the state's tax structure with respect to personal property taxes. Following his presentation, Mr. Drenkard fielded questions from steering committee members.

Mr. Gardner shared information about the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP) and organized his presentation around his answers to the following four questions:

1. Why should a state bother to keep a personal property tax in place?
  2. How should a state modify its personal property tax if it is kept in place?
  3. If you decide to scale back or repeal a state personal property tax, how can you do so sensibly?
  4. What is the link between personal property taxes and economic development?
- Mr. Gardner also responded to questions from steering committee members following his presentation.

Mr. Witynski, Mr. Turonie, Mr. Larson, Ms. Kussow, and Mr. Pickart participated in a panel discussion. Each was asked to share the opinions of the organization that they represent on personal property taxes, and to reflect on the ideas and recommendations shared by Mr. Gardner and Mr. Drenkard. They also addressed questions posed by the steering committee members.

After hearing from these speakers, the steering committee discussed the work of the committee thus far. Chair Stroebel asked steering committee members to provide comments on what the members have learned during this project and what changes to the personal property tax system in Wisconsin should be made, if any. He asked that these comments be limited to no more than approximately a page of text and that they be submitted by September 10<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Stroebel also described the form of the report that the committee staff will be preparing for submission to the Joint Legislative Council summarizing the symposia series project. He noted that steering committee members' formal comments will be included in this report.

The Chair also explained that he may call another meeting of the symposia series steering committee on October 1<sup>st</sup>, if he deems it necessary after reviewing steering committee members' comments.