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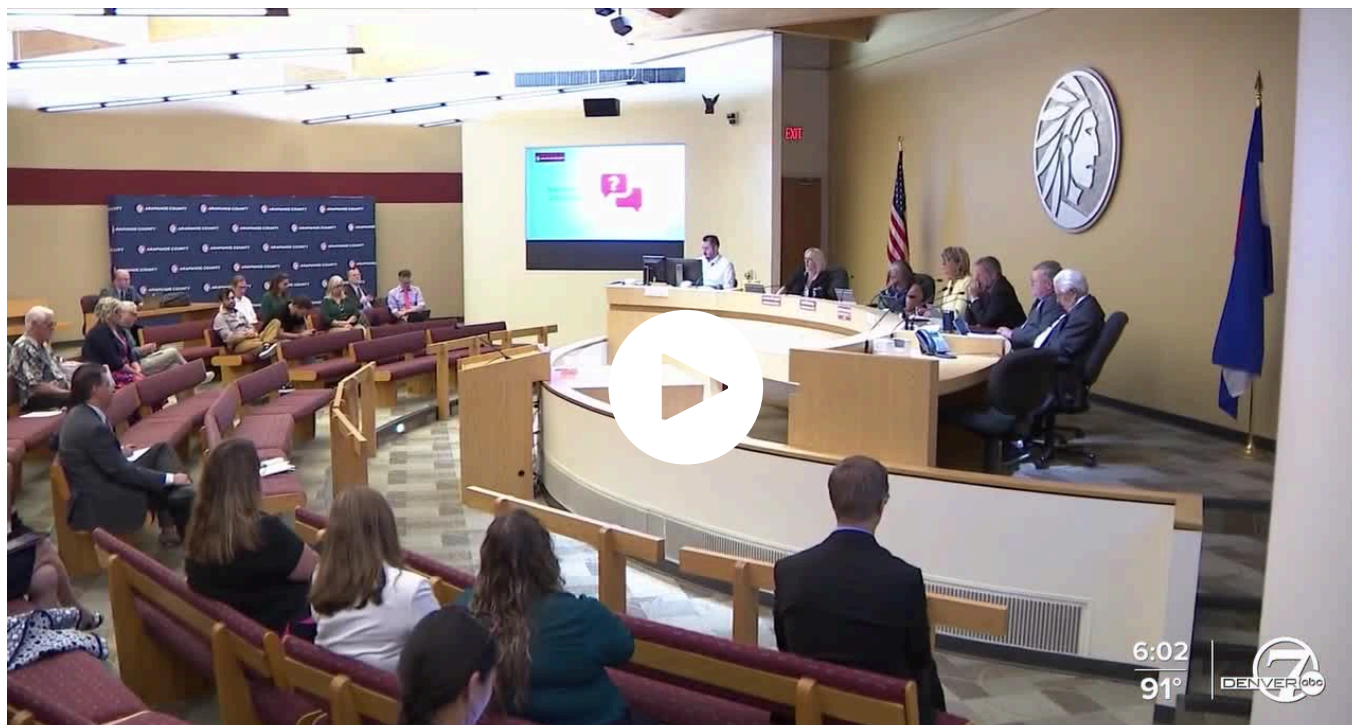


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# Voters to decide whether Arapahoe County can lift the TABOR cap on collecting property tax

In a 4-1 vote, County Commissioners sent the issue to voters in the November election.



The debate in Arapahoe County rages on about whether or not the county should be allowed to collect more property taxes. But voters will now have the final say.

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By: Danielle Kreutter

*Posted 5:54 PM, Aug 20, 2024 and last updated 5:27 AM, Aug 21, 2024*

ARAPAHOE COUNTY, Colo. - The debate in Arapahoe County rages on about whether or not the county should be allowed to collect more property taxes. Voters will now have the final say after a 4-1 decision by county commissioners Tuesday.

The majority of public comment at the afternoon meeting was in favor of the measure, but several critics spoke up as well, including TABOR Fountain Board Director Natalie Menten.

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"The irony here is that we've spent two or three legislative sessions talking about property taxes being too high, and we need caps," said Menten of the effort to remove the current property tax cap in place in Arapahoe County.

Here's how the question will appear on the November ballot:



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## Arapahoe County property tax ballot measure

Without increasing the tax rate and without adopting any new tax, shall Arapahoe County be authorized to collect, retain and spend revenue that exceeds Article X, Section 20 limitations, beginning January 1, 2025, and continuing each year thereafter, with the funds used to address essential county services and needs, such as:

- Repairing, maintaining, and improving county roads, bridges, and transportation systems, including snow plowing, for more than 1,265 lane miles of neighborhood streets and county roads;
- Crime prevention and response by the sheriff's office, including officers, staff and equipment, mental health co-responders, and 24/7 neighborhood patrol area coverage;
- Housing solutions, homelessness prevention and response, protective services for vulnerable children, youth and older adults, and mental health resources;

provided that all spending of such revenues be reported in the county's annual independent audit published on the county website and monitored and reviewed by a resident advisory committee and that any increase of the maximum allowed tax rate of 15.821 mills requires additional voter approval; and shall all such revenues be collected, retained and spent notwithstanding section 29-1-301, C.R.S., section 29-1-1702, C.R.S. (in the event such limitation becomes law) and any other revenue or expenditure limitation provided by law?

Photo courtesy of Element5 Digital/Unsplash

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Commissioners in support of the measure say it boils down to asking voters to give the county permission to collect more money than is allowed under the current TABOR cap.

"We only keep about \$32 a month for the average home to provide all of the services that we provide in Arapahoe County," said Arapahoe County Commissioner Carrie Warren-Gully of the average takeaway revenue for the county on a home valued at \$500,000.

Anything above the TABOR cap is given back to residents as a tax credit, which is deducted from their property tax bill.

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Because of that, the county has not been collecting tens of millions of dollars each year that could have funded public services. Supporters of the measure want to end the cap.

If the TABOR cap is removed, the county estimates it would collect an additional \$74 million yearly.

Denver7 asked what is at stake if the measure doesn't pass.

"We do recognize the fact that we will have to make about \$35 million worth of cuts in our budget. Now, not only will that affect the essential services that we're able to provide, it affects the timeliness in which we're able to provide those services," said Warren-Gully, "I would say that it does not allow for us to keep up with the deferred maintenance that we've seen over the last 20 years. We have \$316 million worth of projects that need to take place, and we don't have the funding to do that. So unless we have a stable finance and budget, we can't move forward with making some of those large capital investments we know are needed, doing a lot more with a lot less."

Supporters are adamant that the measure is not a property tax increase.

"I call that false," said Menten. "That is a tax increase; it's going to take away the property tax cap that's in TABOR."

The county has an online calculator that shows what residents' property tax bills could look like if the cap and tax credits are removed, based on the value of their homes.

[Click here](#) for access to that tool.







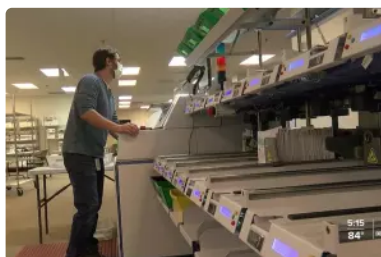
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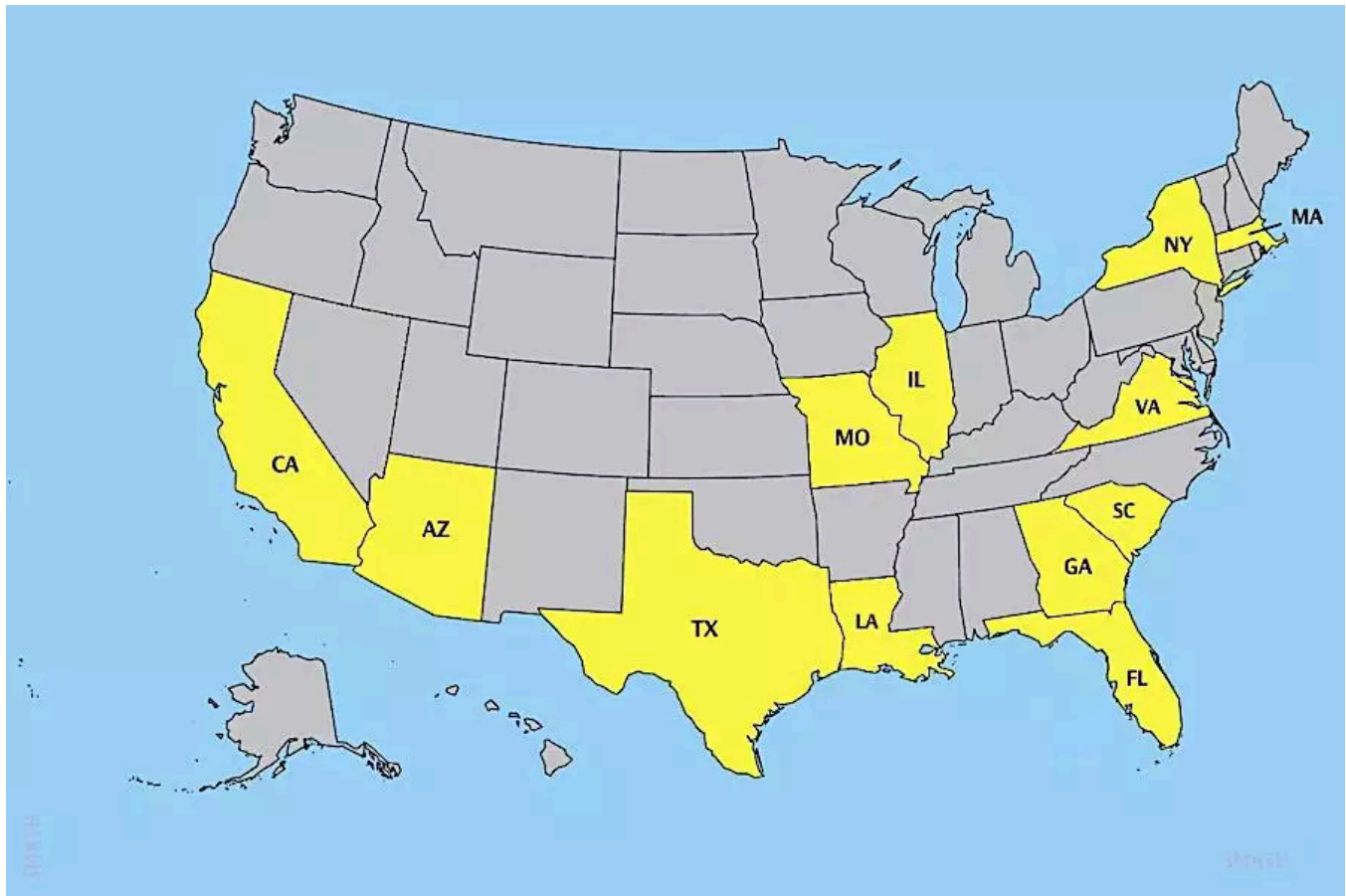
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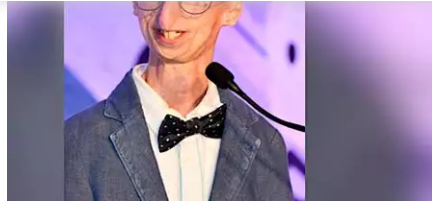


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