



State College Borough Realty Transfer Tax Campaign

In December 2008, the Centre County Association of REALTORS® (CCAR) opposed an increase in the realty transfer tax (RTT) in State College Borough. State College Borough is a Home Rule municipality and has the legal right to increase the RTT. In fact, the borough previously increased the RTT by .50% in 2001. CCAR became aware of the proposal when a member read a public notice advertising the Borough Council's intentions less than two weeks prior to the scheduled vote. The Borough increased the local portion of the RTT from 1.5% to 1.75%. After following up with borough council it is believed that CCAR was able to sway two votes but was unsuccessful due to the absence of a supportive council member.

In 10 days CCAR took the following actions:

- CCAR President, Chair of Government Affairs Committee and District 5 Vice President met with PAR staff and Joel Searby from Strategic Guidance Systems (SGS). At the end of the meeting CCAR decided to carry out a public opinion poll and targeted mailer to garner public support in their opposition.
- SGS composed a public opinion poll and put it in the field one week prior to the State College Borough Council meeting
 - 83% of the electorate is in favor of reducing government waste and spending as opposed to increasing any tax.
 - CCAR has higher name recognition than any individual Borough Council member.
 - The majority of residents were not aware that State College Borough was voting on a budget in 7 days.
- SGS created a mailer that was sent to 1,000 targeted residents. The mailer encouraged residents to contact Council members and ask them to cut spending and not increase taxes.
- PAR staff worked with CCAR President, Government Affairs Committee Chair and Association Executive on the logistics needed for a grass roots campaign.
 - Key messages
 - Call To Action
 - Letters to Borough Council
 - Talking points for the media