

An article by Morgan Trau in the Ohio Capital Journal identifies the position the three candidates for governor are taking on property tax.

Public school districts' dependance on property tax is now about the highest since the 1970s before the state income tax was enacted. School funding was in a crisis mode in the 1960s. Democrats and Republicans joined forces in an effort to improve the state's role in school funding by enacting the state income tax. (The rates have been eroded ever since.)

Dependence of school districts on property tax has almost reached an all-time high since the 1960s. This is despite the Ohio Supreme Court decisions in 1997, 2000, 2001, and 2002 that dependence on property tax must be reduced.

The state is required by Article VI, section 2 of the Ohio Constitution to secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools. By way of the Cupp/Patterson Fair School Funding Plan, state officials could have solved the school funding problem and alleviated the property tax problem.

Instead, state officials violated the Ohio Constitution by giving mostly wealthier folks private school vouchers. This action is unethical and immoral, as well as unconstitutional.

The Ohio legislature and governor have betrayed citizens of Ohio. State officials will ultimately pay the price of their misuse and abuse of power.

Tax expert critical of Ohio governor candidates' property tax relief proposals

By [Morgan Trau](#)-July 23, 2026, 3:50 am

The candidates for Ohio governor have unveiled more in-depth policies to reduce the growing property tax crisis. A nonpartisan tax expert isn't too impressed.

Although he initially campaigned to eliminate all property taxes, Ohio Republican nominee for governor Vivek Ramaswamy says that's no longer feasible.

"In an ideal world, I don't want to pay any of these taxes, OK?" Ramaswamy said at a town hall event in Strongsville last Friday.

He now wants to roll back property taxes to 2020 levels and then cap their growth.

"I can deliver that property tax cut without hurting local police, fire, or schools because that's what they were working with just a few years ago in the pre-pandemic era," he said.

Nonpartisan tax expert Zach Schiller with Policy Matters Ohio slammed the idea.

"I think that's a lousy idea, in part, because you're providing aid to a lot of people who don't need it," Schiller said. "Let's target our property tax relief at people who can't afford it."

Schiller talked to us about ideas raised by both governor candidate teams and how realistic they are. He is not endorsing, but speaking about the policy ideas separately from the candidate.

He said that returning to 2020 levels would only work if the state pays for all the lost revenue to local governments.

Previously, we have asked Ramaswamy how he plans to pay for this, but he hasn't answered. But at the town hall, he floated an idea.

"Simplify the bureaucracy, downsize the bureaucracy," Ramaswamy said.

Attempting to get rid of "waste" isn't entirely new to the candidate. Prior to announcing his run for governor, he was supposed to lead the federal Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). He didn't end up doing so.

"It's an easy thing to say that doesn't really get at the issue in a significant way," Schiller said, noting that getting rid of 'bureaucracy' would be just a drop in the bucket to making up the money.

Meanwhile, Democratic candidate Amy Acton and her running mate David Pepper just unveiled a policy plan including a rebate for recent tax increases and expanding the homestead exemption.

"You save thousands and thousands of seniors real dollars in what they're paying in property taxes," Pepper said.

The rebate proposal would impact homeowners with household incomes below \$132,000 who pay property taxes on homes valued at or below \$350,000. They would be eligible for a rebate of up to \$1,000 when their property tax bill has increased more than 4% over the prior year.

The campaign is also trying to "crack down on predatory collection practices," including the sale of tax lien certificates to private collectors who charge 18% interest rates.

The homestead exemption proposal would raise the cap on the household income eligibility of Ohio's seniors to \$50,000.

"It's a sensible idea," Schiller said. "I think that it's nowhere near enough."

The Democrats are also proposing an increase in funding for public schools so districts won't need to rely as heavily on property taxes.

"How are you going to pay for some of these tax relief plans?" we asked Pepper.

"It's a large budget; it's about priorities," Pepper responded. "My attitude is: they have found the money to give big gifts and breaks to the people at the top; we can find money and budgets to help everybody else."

In the last budget, Republicans passed a flat income tax for the state's top earners. They also provided \$600 million in unclaimed funds to the Cleveland Browns for their new Brook Park stadium.

Acton and Pepper said they would not increase any existing taxes, though.

Schiller questioned how much of their plans would be accomplished given the lack of action from the general assembly for years.

"Will there be any chance that it can actually go anywhere? I would hope that there would be, but based on history, we haven't seen a lot of that," he said.

Libertarian candidate Don Kissick, according to his campaign website, is fully supportive of repealing property taxes.

"We prefer to see local consumption-based taxes and because there is no transparency around where the lottery is going (since it's a general education fund), we're thinking it is being used as a stopgap for other areas of the budget. In that, if we balance the budget and eliminate corporate welfare for the larger institutions, we can save a ton of money for Ohioans," the campaign website said.

Schiller said that was absolutely the worst idea he had heard, and would be "catastrophic" for the state. The most likely to be successful, in his view, was the homestead exemption. He would favor a circuit breaker, though.

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