

## **WILMETTE SCHOOL DISTRICT 39 FAILS TO PROVIDE EVIDENCE THAT ITS APRIL 2011 REFERENDUM BALLOT LANGUAGE “FOLLOWED ILLINOIS LAW”**

*District discloses no new information in response to FOIA request*

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WILMETTE, IL –Wilmette School District 39 has failed to substantiate its December 3, 2012, claim in a media release that its April 2011 referendum ballot language “correctly followed Illinois law as it existed at that time.”

On January 18, 2013, Sorock submitted a written Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the District, asking for all materials “supporting, explaining, or justifying” its claim that the April 2011 referendum ballot language “followed Illinois law as it existed at that time.” The District responded to Sorock’s FOIA request with only one document—a draft version of its December 3, 2012, media release showing that one of the District’s attorneys—Ares G. Dalianis— had inserted the claim language into the release.

Sorock, along with Taxpayers United of America (TUA), had sued the District to reverse tax increases that were a result of illegal ballot language in an April 2011 referendum election. In November 2012, Sorock and TUA asked the First District Appellate Court to dismiss their suit due to the earlier reluctance of the courts to enforce the clear requirements of Illinois property tax law.

“At the December 28, 2012, District 39 Board of Education meeting, I challenged the District to substantiate its “followed Illinois law” assertion, and later followed up with a FOIA request for any information that would have supported their claim,” said Sorock. “It is now clear that the District is unable to do so. As TUA and I demonstrated in our lawsuit, the required calculation of an individual’s property tax increase was understated by more than a factor of three.

“The District has continued to blame TUA and me for the costs associated with defending the District’s April 2011 referendum language. Now that we know conclusively that the District itself allowed legally non-forming language to be placed on the ballot, the District should not look to blame those who uncovered the error, but instead those who made the flawed calculation of the tax impact in the first place,” Sorock concluded.

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