



Q. New Jersey has the highest property taxes in the country. What specific plan do you have to alleviate New Jersey's property tax burden?

Chris Christie (Republican) - I have outlined a number of steps that I believe must be taken immediately to reduce the terrible burden that property taxes place on all residents of our state. We need increased accountability that needs to start with our schools, especially those that fail our children. Taxpayers are paying thousands of dollars a year in property taxes, the bulk of which goes towards education, and we aren't seeing the proper results in the form of a first-rate education. We can cut the cost of providing quality education by following models used in charter schools – many of which exist in Abbott districts – and provide a better education at lower cost by allowing for competition. In addition, I will establish merit pay, tenure reform and pension reform

Jon Corzine (Democratic) - I have worked to find new ways to reduce the tax burden. I instituted the necessary structural reforms for long-term change at the State level, while preserving property tax relief for our seniors and those who need it most.

I have provided more direct property tax relief in four years than any other Governor in New Jersey's history – nearly \$7 billion put into the pockets of New Jerseyans.

Last year, the average increase in **property taxes across the state rose by the lowest rate in a decade** – 3.7%, which is under the 4% cap required that I established.

Through incentivizing shared services and consolidation, overhauling the school funding formula, and increasing oversight over school spending, we will reduce the cost of government at all levels.

Jason Cullen (People Not Politics) - This goes back to the plan for sales and corporate taxes. It is usually seen, in towns and cities, that where more businesses are, so lower are the taxes. By bringing responsibilities back to the towns and cities, we eliminate the majority of state aid, the need for the Abbott program, and other programs that are not showing society a return on the investment. Remember, there was a time without state income taxes in New Jersey.

Christopher Daggett (Independent for New Jersey) – The only way New Jersey is going to begin reducing property taxes and other taxes is to bring government spending under control. Eighty percent of all government spending falls into five key areas: Medicaid, aid to education, aid to municipalities, pensions, and health care benefits. Unless we rein in spending at all levels of government, the state will never be able to reduce the tax burden on residents and businesses. I would eliminate the wasteful property tax rebate program and replace it with a direct tax credit.

Kenneth Kaplan (Libertarian Party) – Property taxes are used primarily to pay for public schools. There is no logical nexus between the value of a home and the responsibility of its owners to pay for education. We need to amend the State Constitution to allow for a tuition based educational system, which will also result in greater educational choice and foster higher quality and better economy in education. This will be fairer to senior citizens, the childless, home schoolers, parents sending their children to private or religious schools, and inner city students. Tax credits for businesses and individuals paying the tuition of disadvantaged students will be part of the “safety net” that will enhance educational opportunities throughout the state, especially in urban areas that currently have inferior public schools.

Joshua Leinsdorf (Fair Election Party) - Eliminate county government entirely. This will reduce the property tax bill by about 10% to 15%. Counties are obsolete, gerrymanders, inefficient and the primary source of political corruption and nepotism. Counties are almost a secret, invisible government. Most voters in New Jersey can not name a single county elected official (or their own state legislators, for that matter.)

Alvin Lindsay (Lindsay for Governor) - My plan is to freeze taxes for the next four years, to relieve the New Jersey tax burden. New Jersey taxpayers have suffered enough.

David Meiswinkle (Middle Class Empowerment) - Honest government would go along way to lowering taxes. Reasonable employee contracts would also assist. The Public Good must become a paramount term when dealing with jobs. The job base must be stabilized here and then stimulated to grow. The Federal trade agreements must be pressured to be reversed. Our State wants its manufacturing back; and when it returns green technologies will run them, using the state of the art technology we will encourage and assist in developing. A study of the Flat sales tax will be conducted, with the results determining whether it could be implemented to substitute for or reduce property taxes.

Gregory Pason (Socialist Party USA) - We must fund state and local expenses through progressive state income taxes not regressive taxes like property and sales taxes. This means moving educational funding away from local property taxes to the state income tax and slashing sales and “sin” taxes, which hit poor and working class communities hardest.

Kostas Petris (For the People) – Like in question number two. We are going to eliminate all of our governments waste. We will audit and analyze every department so they are more efficiently run. No more meeting quotas to a budget so the departments get the same amount of money next year. Together with the help of the true state workers and citizens we can solve these problems. Examples: eliminate special interest groups, eliminate those 14,000 temp. positions, government vehicles, eliminate executive cell phones, alone for this election the waste of already received information that is keep being sent to me, matching funds, people stealing from work, the list is endless. No wrong doing, will not be overlooked any more.

Gary Steele (Leadership, Independence, Vision) – Part of my real estate tax reduction plan centers on re-allocating State aid to the suburbs. The suburbs have been left empty handed when Trenton decides who receives State aid. I will immediately eliminate free preschools and save \$600 million and re-distribute that \$600 million to the municipalities for an immediate real estate tax reduction. My Lieutenant Governor will also be in charge of reviewing every single county's budget and spending. My administration will look to reduce county government, which will also lead to an immediate real estate tax reduction.

Gary Stein (Independent, multiple slogans) - I've said all I'm going to say about cutting government payroll; just remember, nobody gets laid off in my plan. There's going to be massive retirements soon and that's an opportunity as well to get a handle on property taxes. Nitpicking to death, or scoffing at the "idea" I floated in questions #1 and #2 misses the whole point.