



**For Release:** October 25, 2007

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***Statement of Mayoral Candidate Tom Henry on the Property Tax Issue and Governor Mitch Daniels' New Plan:***

*Fort Wayne, Indiana* – Finding a real solution to the property tax crisis is a priority issue for me. I know firsthand the pain it is causing Fort Wayne residents. Back in July, I challenged state elected officials to give emergency relief to those in need and to begin work immediately on a long-term solution.

I also pledged to do my part as mayor by delivering cost-effective, high-quality services and getting the most bang out of every buck. It's why I will create a collaborative purchasing network when elected. Buying in bulk and passing the savings on to our citizens just makes sense.

So does addressing the property tax crisis. It is a leadership imperative for me. Because it is, I offer these comments on the issue and the plan put forth by Governor Mitch Daniels.

I commend the governor for his ideas, for acknowledging the need for immediate relief and for his willingness to consider all options, even amending the Indiana constitution. But I offer this caution: Before we write anything into this historic document that has served Hoosiers well for 156 years, I counsel the governor and state legislators to make sure that any changes made to it are in the best long-term interests of all citizens, in particular, the people of Fort Wayne.

I also urge that the choices made give more control, not less, to local jurisdictions. The people of our counties, cities and towns and those they elect know best how to meet their own needs. Local leaders are already doing more with less and with fewer options to make their communities' competitive and attractive. Flexibility and greater local control must be part of any long-term solution.

I know what I'm talking about. When I was on Fort Wayne City Council, I led the bipartisan effort to shift some of the tax burden away from property taxpayers. You can be sure I will continue that fight as your mayor on the home front, at the statehouse and anywhere the battle against higher taxes is waged.

*Tom Henry is the Democratic candidate for Mayor of Fort Wayne. He is a successful business owner, a five-term Fort Wayne City Councilman and a nonprofit leader with deep roots in the community.*

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Paid for by the Henry for Mayor Committee, Mark J. Andorfer, Treasurer