

State Question 847

CareerTech Presentation Talking Points

These talking points correspond to the presentation slide decks available in the [SQ Shared Materials Folder](#). There is one for general audiences and another that includes a section for presentations to CareerTech and K-12 program staff. To customize in Canva, use the slide deck template available [HERE](#).

GENERAL AUDIENCES

Slide 1 - State Question 847: What It Could Mean for CareerTech and Oklahoma Communities

- Thank you for the opportunity to be here today.
- Our goal is to provide factual, educational information about State Question 847 and explain how it relates to CareerTech and other locally funded community services across Oklahoma.
- This presentation is intended to help you better understand the issues so you can make an informed decision. We are not here to tell anyone how to vote.

Slide 2 - Understanding the Issues

- State Question 847 proposes changes that could affect how local communities are funded.
- The measure would ultimately reduce local property tax revenue.
- Because local property taxes support CareerTech, K-12 public schools, libraries, emergency services, county government, roads and bridges, and public health, the potential impacts reach far beyond any one organization.
- **This isn't just a conversation about taxes.**
- It's a conversation about:
 - how communities invest in local priorities
 - and what those decisions could mean for K-12 public schools, our CareerTech system and the many essential public services our communities rely on every day
- Property tax relief is an important issue for many Oklahomans.
- But we want to help provide additional context about how these measures could affect local funding so you can make an informed decision.

Slide 3 - What Are Property Taxes (Ad Valorem Taxes)?

- Let's begin with a basic question: What are property taxes?
- Ad valorem taxes are local property taxes paid on real estate.
- Unlike state income or sales taxes, these dollars generally stay in the community where they are collected.
- Those local dollars help support CareerTech, public schools and many other services communities rely on every day.
- Understanding that property taxes are local - not state - provides important context for the rest of today's discussion.

Slide 4 - How Are Local Property Taxes Used?

- Property taxes support many of the services people depend on every day.
 - K-12 public schools, libraries, emergency services, public health, the CareerTech system, county government and roads and bridges.
- As you can see, these aren't abstract government programs. These are services people rely on every day.
- One of the most important concepts to remember is this: **Property taxes stay local. Local dollars fund local priorities.**
- Because property tax revenue stays in the community where it is collected, local leaders can make decisions based on local priorities.
- Communities have different educational and workforce needs, different industries and unique challenges.
- Local funding provides the flexibility to invest in programs and services that best meet those unique needs.
- This principle of local control applies not only to CareerTech, but also to many other community services.

Slide 5 - State Question 847 (transition slide)

Slide 6 - How Property Tax Value Works in Oklahoma

- Your property has a market value, generally, what it could sell for.
- It also has a taxable value used to calculate property taxes.
- Oklahoma law already limits how quickly that taxable value can increase from one year to the next.
- That means your taxable value may grow more slowly than your property's market value.

- SQ 847 would further lower those existing annual growth limits. But the impact doesn't stop with your tax bill.

Slide 7 - Homestead vs. Non-Homestead Property

- Another important part of understanding Oklahoma property taxes is knowing the difference between homestead and non-homestead property.
- Homestead exempted property generally refers to a home that the owner occupies as their primary residence and for which they have applied for and received a homestead exemption.
- Non-homestead exempted property is property that does not qualify for that designation. This can include:
 - commercial property
 - rental property
 - second homes
 - other real estate
 - primary residences that do not have an approved homestead exemption
- The distinction matters because Oklahoma law currently places different limits on how much the taxable value of each type of property can increase from one year to the next.
- For homestead property, taxable value generally cannot increase by more than 3% annually. For non-homestead property, the annual limit is 5%.
- These limits apply to the growth in taxable value — not necessarily to the property's market value. A property's market value may increase more quickly, but the amount used to calculate property taxes is subject to these annual limits.
- We'll come back to these two categories later because SQ 847 proposes changing both of these existing limits.

Slide 8 - What Does SQ 847 Propose?

- SQ 847 will be on the **November 3 ballot statewide**.
- SQ 847 was referred to voters by the Oklahoma Legislature through a legislative referendum.
- SQ 847 focuses on how quickly taxable property values are allowed to increase from year to year for property tax purposes.
- It would **not lower the current taxable value of your property**.
- Instead, it lowers the amount that taxable value is allowed to increase each year beginning in 2027:
 - Homestead and agricultural property: 3% → 1.75%
 - Most other property: 5% → 4%

- In simple terms: taxable property values would grow more slowly than they do under current law.
- Because taxable property values make up the local tax base, this would also mean slower growth in local property tax revenue over time.
- That revenue supports CareerTech, K-12 schools and other community services, which rely on revenue growth to keep pace with rising costs and the needs of growing communities.
- Under SQ 847, taxable values and the local revenue tied to them would grow more slowly, potentially limiting the resources available to meet those increasing needs.

Slide 9 - What would be the impact of SQ 847 over time?

- The impact of SQ 847 would happen gradually rather than all at once.
- By lowering the annual growth limits, taxable property values would grow more slowly over time.
- Because those values make up the local tax base, local property tax revenue would also grow more slowly.
- As communities grow and costs increase, that revenue may not keep pace with inflation and increasing needs.
- When inflation and service costs outpace local property tax revenue, it would create a funding deficit, meaning communities would have fewer resources to maintain the critical services they provide.
- Over time, slower revenue growth could mean fewer resources available to expand programs, invest in facilities and equipment, or respond to changing community and workforce needs.
- The key takeaway: while SQ 847 does not cut today's funding, it limits how quickly an important source of local funding can grow in the future.

Slide 10 - Statewide Impact On Local Communities (transition slide)

Slide 11 - If Local Property Tax Revenues Are Reduced, What Replaces It?

- Here's where this all hits home: what would fund our essential community services if we chip away at property tax revenues?
- SQ 847 does not identify a dedicated replacement funding source for the local property tax revenue that could be reduced or eliminated.
- This is an important consideration for voters evaluating this measure.

Slide 12 - Why Does This Matter to Our Community?

- Stable funding helps communities plan for the future instead of reacting to funding uncertainty.
- It supports the essential services people rely on every day, including public schools, public safety, CareerTech and infrastructure.
- It also gives local leaders the flexibility to respond to changing community needs and workforce demands.
- Strong local funding helps communities continue investing in the people and services that support long-term success.
- That's why understanding how these measures could affect local funding is important for every community.

Slide 13 - Isn't Paying Property Tax Like Renting from the Government?

- We're going to talk through a few common questions about property taxes and the state question.
- Comparing property taxes to "renting from the government" is a common argument by those who believe homeowners should not face continuous annual fees just for keeping their property.
- Legally and practically, it is a mandatory local tax rather than a "rental agreement," and it has nothing to do with state government.
- Property taxes stay in the local community where they are collected.
- Local voters and locally elected officials help decide how those dollars are invested.

Slide 14 - If Property Taxes Are Reduced, Won't Governments Just Spend Less?

- Reducing revenue does not reduce the cost of providing essential community services.
- Communities would still need to fund services like CareerTech, public schools, public safety, roads and bridges, and public health.
- If less local revenue is available, **communities would have to make difficult budget decisions.**
- Those decisions could include **reducing services, shifting costs to other taxpayers, seeking new local revenue sources, or relying on additional state funding if it becomes available.**
 - **They could increase taxes on businesses, agricultural land or on individuals.**
 - Unless they cut these critical services, the money has to come from somewhere.

- The key point is that lower property tax revenue does not eliminate the need for these services, it creates a funding gap that communities must address.

Slide 15 - What If Local Funding Declines?

- These are examples of the types of impacts communities could face if local funding declines.
- Every community would make its own budget decisions based on its local needs and priorities.
 - Several communities currently enjoy smaller class sizes - that would likely change.
 - You could be waiting longer for emergency services to respond.
 - It could impact the availability of skilled workers for local businesses.
- The specific impacts could vary, but the challenge would be the same: **providing essential services with fewer local resources.**

Slide 16 - Looking Ahead

- I encourage you to mark your calendars now for the election on November 3 and make a plan to vote.
- Whether you're voting early, absentee or in person on Election Day, we encourage everyone to be informed before casting a ballot.

Slide 17 - Where Can I Learn More Before Voting?

- If you'd like to learn more, OkACTE has developed additional resources to help answer common questions.
- The QR code on this slide links to the OkACTE FAQ page, where you'll find factual information about SQ 847, CareerTech funding and other frequently asked questions.
- We encourage everyone to review reliable sources and continue learning before Election Day.

Slide 18 - Questions?

- Thank you for your time and attention today.
- We hope this presentation has provided a better understanding of how local property taxes support CareerTech and other community services, as well as what State Question 847 proposes.

- If you have additional questions, please don't hesitate to reach out using the contact information provided.

STAFF PRESENTATION SECTION

Slide 19 - CareerTech and K-12 Program Staff: Communicating about SQ 847 (transition slide)

Slide 20 - Why It Matters To Us

- This isn't just a policy issue - it has the potential to affect the work we do every day.
- Whether you work at a technology center, in a K-12 CareerTech program or at the state level, local funding supports the programs and services we provide.
- Changes to local funding could personally affect students, adult learners, employers and the communities we serve.

Slide 21 - Communicating About State Question 847 (You May)

- As CareerTech employees, you may be asked questions about State Question 847 in your official role.
- You may explain how CareerTech is funded, share factual information about the measures and discuss their potential impact using approved materials.
- If you are unsure how to answer a question, refer the individual to the approved resources or your communications team rather than speculating.

Slide 22 - Communicating About State Question 847 (Do Not)

- When communicating in your official capacity, remember that CareerTech's role is to educate, not persuade.
- Avoid expressing personal opinions, encouraging support for or opposition to a ballot measure or using public resources for campaign-related activities.
- If questions arise about what is appropriate, consult your supervisor, communications team or legal counsel.
- That said, in your personal lives - when you are not working or acting in an official capacity as a tech center employee, for example in conversations with friends and family - you are welcome and encouraged to share your personal opinions and views.

Slide 23 - Questions You May Hear: "I Just Want Lower Property Taxes."

- These are some of the most common questions you may encounter.
- Acknowledge the question, respond with factual information using the approved messaging and avoid speculation or personal opinions.
- If you don't know the answer, it's perfectly appropriate to say you'll follow up or refer someone to additional resources.
- **"I just want lower property taxes."**
 - Many people are interested in property tax relief, and it's appropriate to acknowledge that.
 - Rather than debating the issue, encourage people to think about the role local property taxes play in supporting CareerTech and other community services.
 - Bring the conversation back to how local property taxes are used and what services they support.

Slide 24 - Questions You May Hear: "Won't the state replace the funding?"

- Explain that the state question does not identify a dedicated replacement funding source.
- Avoid speculating about what the Legislature may or may not do in the future.

Slide 25 - Questions You May Hear: "Does this only affect CareerTech?"

- No. CareerTech is one of many locally funded services supported through property taxes.
- Local property taxes also support public schools, libraries, emergency services, county government, roads and bridges and other community priorities.

Slide 26 - Questions You May Hear: "Why should I (or my community) care?"

- This question is really about local priorities.
- Property taxes help fund services that communities rely on every day, including CareerTech and many other essential public services.
- Encourage people to consider what those services mean to their own community and how they are supported today.

Slide 27 - Key Messages for Staff

- These are the core messages we want every presenter to communicate consistently.

- Use these themes throughout presentations, interviews and community conversations.
- Personalize with local examples, but remain consistent with these approved messages.

Slide 28 - Questions?

- Thank you for your time and attention.
- We appreciate your commitment to helping your communities better understand these important issues.
- If you have questions after today's presentation, please don't hesitate to reach out (provide contact info).