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Tax equity: a legislative priority

Florida ranks 50th in the nation in education funding for K-through-college. We have the second-highest drop-out rate (Georgia is first), and the third-highest juvenile incarceration rate (above Wyoming and South Dakota) in the country.

Statistics like these will not bring companies with high-paying jobs to our state.

State and local taxes provide the basic support for Florida's public schools. One way to obtain more education funding is through a more fair distribution of the tax burden.

In the upcoming State Legislative session, the Florida League of Women Voters will be advocating for improvement in two areas of tax unfairness: income tax exemptions for large multi-state corporations and sales tax exemptions for special interests.

Currently, many Florida businesses, particularly

small- and medium-sized companies, pay more income taxes than they should because large multi-state companies are not paying their fair share. These large companies are able, under Florida law, to declare their income in another state. Small business owners and Florida citizens suffer.

It's time to address this inequity by requiring these large, un-taxed businesses to pay their fair share. One way many states are doing this is through a process called "combined reporting," which essentially treats the parent corporation and most of its subsidiaries as one entity for state income tax purposes. Their nationwide profits are added together and the state then taxes a portion of that combined income, thus nullifying a variety of abusive income tax avoidance strategies.

A second area of tax unfairness is state sales tax exemptions. In Florida, many loopholes exist that reward special interests and provide no public benefit. Last March, Florida Tax Watch, a business-backed research group, compiled a list of \$225 million in annual sales tax exemptions that could be eliminated, including those for charter fishing boats, bottled water, veterinary medicines, sales of religious items, movie

theater concession rent, Super Bowl tickets and sales of U.S. and state flags.

In the last legislative session, committees in both the Florida Senate and House reviewed sales tax exemptions. Incredibly, none were eliminated. Instead, to help balance the budget, fees were raised on services such as drivers' licenses, title transfers, court fees, university students and fishing licenses. Some of those fees more than doubled and several are for items that seniors and low income families cannot do without.

With the continuing decline in property tax revenues, the need to equalize the tax burden by repealing unwarranted or no-longer-affordable corporate income and sales tax exemptions is more critical than ever before.

Now is the time to ask your state legislators to hold Florida's businesses accountable for their fair share of the tax burden.

You can find out who your representatives are and send them an email from our website www.lwvcolliercounty.org under "Find Your Representative." To support the Florida League of Women Voters Lobby Fund, go to www.lwvfla.org.

Remember – democracy is not a spectator sport.

Shula's Steak House at the Hilton Naples presents the perfect prime rib

Sous Chef Brian David
Shula's Steak House Hilton Naples

In Naples you can find almost any kind of cuisine whether it is fusion, French, Italian, American, or Southwestern. But one thing is for sure, it is not easy to find great Prime Rib at an affordable price. Look no further, because at Shula's Steak House at the Hilton Naples our slow roasted prime rib has proven to be a crowd pleaser. Available at lunch and dinner, our prime rib entrée has a flavor that is perfection and at an affordable price.

We start off by prepping our 17 to 20 pound bone-in prime rib eye with a mixture of blended canola oil and meat and poultry rub. Combining these two ingredients separately in a mixing bowl before applying

to the rib ensures an even application of the oil and rub. After the entire rib is coated with the mixture we place it bone down into a pre-heated 175 degree oven for four hours. At Shula's we cook our rib eyes to 115 degrees internally which gives us a beautiful rare to medium rare temperature.

After removing the rib from the oven we then flip it over to rest for approximately 30 minutes; this helps keep the juices developing inside. It is now ready to serve and enjoy.

At Shula's we choose to purchase and cook bone in rib eye for more flavor. The cooking procedure and marinating will be the same if you choose to go with a boneless rib eye. This is a great idea for barbecues, football parties, or any other large events, or you



can leave all the work up to us and come visit us at Shula's Steak House, 5111 Tamiami Trail North in the Hilton, Naples. Call 239.430.4999.



Dental Excellence

Dr. Malick would like to invite you to her state-of-the-art dental office located on the Southwest corner of Airport Road and Vanderbilt Beach Road, next to Walgreens.

Please call us today to schedule your complimentary consultation.



Cheryl L. Malick, DMD