**Fiscal Facts: K-12 Property Taxes Rise Modestly Despite State-Imposed Limits**

Despite measures in the current state budget to lower property tax levies for K-12 schools, those levies are rising modestly yet again on December bills – clear evidence of the impact of school district referenda approved by voters.

Property tax levies for counties also rose by the largest percentage in over a decade. Still, due to skyrocketing property values, Wisconsin’s taxpayers will see tax rates drop substantially this year.

Each December, the Wisconsin Policy Forum analyzes preliminary Department of Revenue data to track how property tax levies are changing across Wisconsin’s school districts, counties, technical colleges, and special districts. Data on municipal tax levies will not be available until early next year.

Property taxpayers in Wisconsin will pay $78.7 million more towards K-12 schools on bills being mailed out this month, preliminary figures show. The increase of about 1.5% is relatively modest, especially given larger tax increases in past years and the current high rate of inflation.

However, in the 2021-23 state budget, lawmakers and Gov. Tony Evers approved measures that were meant and projected at the time to actually lower K-12 property taxes. The hundreds of school referenda that have passed in the last handful of years – including last month – are a likely cause, as voters have opted to override the state measures and increase their own property taxes.

Property tax levies for counties will rise by 3.2%, from $2.38 billion in 2021 to $2.46 billion in 2022. That is the largest increase since an identical 3.2% rise in 2009.

These increases come at a time when local governments and school districts have benefited from federal pandemic aid but also face rising costs from high inflation. The Consumer Price Index rose 7.7% in October over the same month in 2021, much more than the average statewide increase of any of the local levies.

Also, modest property tax increases for local governments will coincide with about a 14% increase in the value of property in the state – the highest single-year increase in recent memory. So while many taxpayers will see higher bills (depending, in part, on whether their property has been reassessed this year), tax rates will decline because the value of property is increasing much faster.

*This information is a service of the Wisconsin Policy Forum, the state’s leading resource for nonpartisan state and local government research and civic education. Learn more at* [*wispolicyforum.org*](https://wispolicyforum.org/research/state-tax-burden-up-but-overall-burden-still-falling/)*.*