



State Board of Equalization

News Release

Chairwoman Betty T. Yee

1st District – San Francisco

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www.boe.ca.gov

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Yee Announces Legal Aid for Bay Area Taxpayers

Golden Gate law students will assist tax appellants

Betty T. Yee, Chairwoman of the State Board of Equalization, today announced a partnership with Golden Gate University School of Law to assist California taxpayers with appeals being considered by the publicly elected tax board.

“We’re giving law students a chance to test their mettle, practice their adjudicatory skills, and contribute in a very real way,” said Chairwoman Yee, who holds a Master of Public Administration degree from Golden Gate University.

“And taxpayers – at no cost to them – will have access to some of the newest legal talent in California,” she added.

The Board of Equalization hears appeals for a variety of state taxes and fees. Appellants may represent themselves or hire counsel, but the added costs of legal representation can be an additional burden for taxpayers.

Through the Tax Appeals Assistance Program, law students will offer legal assistance by gathering evidence, offering advice, and filing briefs to support eligible taxpayers’ positions.

“This exciting new program furthers the School of Law’s mission of providing our students with practical legal training while at the same time offering an important and needed service to California taxpayers,” said Kim Stanley, Associate Dean and Director of the Tax LLM Program at Golden Gate, who is spearheading the program.

The law students will handle appeals involving Homeowner and Renter Property Tax Assistance (HRA) claims, head of household filing status, state assessments following federal actions, statute of limitations, and relief of interest and penalties. As the program grows, students’ caseloads may extend to other individual and business tax cases.

Students from Chapman University’s School of Law in Orange, the University of the Pacific’s McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento, and the Loyola Law School Los Angeles are also participating.

Over 156 cases have been accepted into the program to date. Of those, 55 were resolved through discussions between the student representative and the state.

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More information on the Tax Appeals Assistance Program, including how to apply for representation, is available at www.boe.ca.gov.

Chairwoman Betty T. Yee was elected to her post in November 2006. Her district includes many of California's coastal counties, from Del Norte to Santa Barbara, and includes the entire San Francisco Bay Area.

The five-member Board of Equalization is a publicly elected tax board. The Board collects nearly \$53 billion annually in taxes and fees supporting state and local government services. It hears business tax appeals, acts as the appellate body for franchise and personal income tax appeals, and plays a significant role in the assessment and administration of property taxes.

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