



Approaching the tipping point of property-tax pressure

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SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

In 2004, a legislative effort to convene a constitutional convention to review the state's tax structure gained some momentum, but it ultimately collapsed when agreement couldn't be reached on the extent of the delegates' responsibilities.

Recently, there have been stirrings of renewed interest in undertaking a comprehensive examination of how state, county and municipal governments, as well as boards of education, raise money to support the programs and services they provide.

The impetus, then as now, originated with the concern over the annual increases in local property taxes and the seeming inability of government to contain yearly increases of as much as 6 and 7 percent -- much less to actually reduce the rates.

The prospect of a constitutional convention has not resurfaced primarily because it would, in all likelihood, fall victim to the institutional wrangling that doomed it six years ago.

while government's ability to provide quality services is maintained.