

Governor to vote no on tax initiative

By BWN J. PLASTINO

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Gov. John V. Evans told some 100 Sears employees at their political gathering Saturday morning he would vote against the 1 percent tax initiative.

He hastened to add that he backed its concept but that it has many constitutional flaws; that it is slanted heavily in favor of public utility and big business and against small business, home owners and farmers, and that it would drastically curtail essential school and other local government services.

The governor added he felt confident the 105 Idaho legislators could come up with a far better property tax reform plan that would fit Idaho's needs, rather than that of California. He noted the present tax initiative is an exact copy of California Proposition 13.

The governor also said he will favor many recommendations compiled by the Governor's Committee on Taxation which he had created before the tax initiative became an issue. He said he opposed one recommendation on this report which favored elimination of tax

for church proper-

ties.

GOP hit

He said the Republican controlled Legislature had refused to halt the shift of the tax burden from utilities to the home owners in the last session but that he is determined to do so.

Evans pointed out taxes have increased from 18 percent for homeowners in 1966 to 43 percent in 1977.

Evans noted home owners are taxed the full market value, farmers are taxed at 50 percent, but utilities and business are taxed at depreciated value.

"This is not fair and I believe the homeowners should get a better break," he said.

He also strongly defended Robert Lenaghan, the Idaho Public Utilities Commission president, for fighting for the rights of the electrical consumer, adding before that time the IPUC "was only a tool of the utilities."

Other points

On other points, the governor said:

— Idaho's economic growth has vitality and prosperity, is the fourth fastest growing state in the union and that many businesses and industries want to come to this state because of its excellent labor, market and

recreational facilities and safety for families.

— Favor a balance management policy to develop resources but keep the environment, including retaining the 2 million acres of the Salmon Primitive Area. He noted there are prospects for finding vast gas and oil reserves in this area, extending from the Wyoming line to Arco, mentioning the area of Garn Mountain and south of Palisades in particular.

— Would ask Congress to appropriate money to prevent the destruction of the Island Park trees from the pine beetle.

Leo Tonks, chairman of the Sears citizenship committee, introduced the governor and Alice Weeks read a patriotic poem.

Evans spent Saturday meeting workers at Rogers Bros., campaigning at shopping malls and other points, and then left to campaign at Blackfoot and later to Pocatello to attend the ISU-BUS game. We attended the Bonneville-Capital football game Friday night.

At reception

He was the guest at a reception sponsored by Energy Inc., attended by 100 guests, most of them prominent leaders of the community, at the Westbank

Friday night.

Evans congratulated the firm on its announcement it plans to build a \$2.5 million office complex on East River road, near the Department of Energy \$10 million office building now rising at Freeman Park.

"Idaho Falls represents the vitality of much of the growth of Idaho," Evans said in a short talk. "This is the kind of business development that we want, one that is free of pollution but contributes to much to development of energy."

He noted Energy Inc. grew in the first year in 1974 from a gross business of \$24,000 to \$10 million in 1978.

Evans noted that if he is re-elected he will become chairman of the National Governor's Association nuclear subcommittee. He is now chairman of the Western Governor's Conference.

Evans said the Idaho Department of Energy is working with the Department of Energy for solving the permanent storage of radioactive wastes.

He concluded by saying the doors to the governor's office are always open, and that he is always available at the phone by calling 1-384-2100.

William Botts, president and chief executive officer, who introduced Evans, noted that company since 1974 grew from three to the present 229 employees, of whom 169 are in Idaho Falls, 49 with the wood waste project at Coeur d'Alene and others in other parts of the nation, and is growing at the rate of 5 percent a month.

Nancy Carlile, Sen. James A. McClure legislative aid, sent greetings from McClure, who has scheduled 52 stops in 27 counties in his campaign.