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Death and Taxes Are No Longer a Certainty
Houston Homeowners Save Hundreds of Dollars on Property Taxes

(HOUSTON) The state's largest property tax consulting firm, O'Connor & Associates, is putting a twist on that catch phrase, 'Nothing is certain but death and taxes,' giving Houston homeowners the opportunity to lower their property taxes and voice their opinions.

Many homeowners are unaware that property taxes are negotiable and that the option to appeal is an inherent right. O'Connor & Associates offers Houstonians a simple, risk-free opportunity to file a protest that could potentially reduce taxes that are unfairly assessed. When a home is assessed below market value, the firm can still reduce property taxes by using unequal appraisal. (Where appraisals in a district are not consistent, a taxpayer may be penalized even though that owner's property is appraised at or below market value.)

The deadline to protest, May 31, 2006,--or 30 days after the appraisal district mail notice of assessed value-- is quickly approaching. (The appraisal district is required to send a notice of assessed value only if the assessed value increased by more than \$1,000.)

O'Connor & Associates utilizes their 32 years of negotiation skills to assist clients through the various levels of assessment protests, including filing a protest, researching the central appraisal district's record card, establishing property value, and finally navigating legal avenues, including attending informal hearings, appraisal review board hearings, and judicial appeals. Clients are not billed for court costs, appraisals, expert witnesses, or legal fees, and are only required to pay the firm if the property taxes are lowered. "We have reduced 95% of our clients' property taxes," said Patrick O'Connor, president of O'Connor & Associates. "Our clients have individually saved an average of \$450 and collectively saved over \$21.5 million." They believe in their mission so much that if they are unable to affect change, they are offering customers a \$50 gift certificate to Pappas restaurants.

O'Connor & Associates, in business since 1974, is a real estate service firm providing appraisals, market research, and federal and ad valorem tax reduction services. Patrick O'Connor, president of the company since 1983, is the author of *Cut Your Texas Property Taxes*, and is frequently acknowledged by national publications as a respected source of information on real estate trends.

For more information about O'Connor & Associates or how to lower your property taxes, visit www.pconnor.com. To schedule an interview or request more information, please contact Erika Sumner, PR by the Book, (281) 895-7190 or erika@prbythebook.com.

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