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State Auditor to review options for California tax agency headquarters

By Jon Ortiz

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A legislative audit committee on Wednesday commissioned an audit of the Board of Equalization headquarters that will consider a range of options for the troubled building and the 2,000 or so employee who work there.

State Auditor **Elaine Howle** said her office can start on it “right away” and finish the work in about five months.

During testimony before the Joint Legislative Audit Committee, Howle described a top-to-bottom review that will consider everything from the cost to stay in the 24-story tower in Sacramento to moving its employees to a new facility. Another option Howle will consider: temporarily moving employees out of the building while it is repaired. The board is one of California’s two tax-collecting agencies.

The building at 450 N St. has a long history of trouble, from toxic mold and leaking windows to falling exterior panels and unreliable elevators. Most recently, a waste water pipe leak affected three floors of the building. Investigators determined the problem is widespread because the drain system wasn’t constructed to code.

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Assemblyman Roger Dickinson, D-Sacramento, requested the audit.

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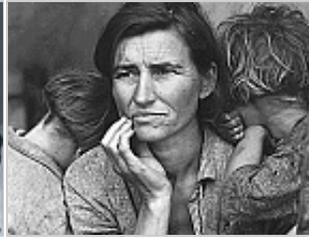
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One option Howle won't consider is to recommend California go to a broad-based flat tax of 6% on all personal