

Fire Protection District No. 17

Special Election - Proposition No. 1
 Submitted by Pierce County Fire Protection District No. 17
 AUTHORIZING PROPERTY TAX LEVIES FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Official Ballot Title: Shall Pierce County Fire Protection District No. 17 be authorized to impose regular property tax levies of fifty cents (\$.50) or less per one thousand dollars (\$1,000) of assessed valuation for each of six consecutive years, beginning in 2004, for basic and advanced (paramedic) emergency medical services?

Explanatory Statement: The Board of Commissioners of Pierce County Fire District #17 passed a resolution to authorize a levy of a property tax in an amount not to exceed fifty cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, each year for six (6) successive years. By resolution, the Board has agreed to levy only twenty five cents in 2005, up to thirty five cents in 2006, up to forty five cents in 2007, and up to fifty cents the remaining three years. This levy would provide funds necessary to operate and maintain emergency aid vehicles staffed by paramedic/firefighters. The District plans to hire six additional paramedic/firefighters over the next six years to meet the growing medical needs of the district. The tax on a \$150,000 home would be no more than \$75.00 per year over the next six years. District voters have authorized an EMS levy since 1979.

Approximately 76% of District calls for service are EMS calls. The regular levy does not adequately fund emergency medical services. Population growth has increased demand for services with annual increases in call volume reaching 10%.

Statement For:

Medic One saves lives! Pierce County Fire District 17 Medic One (EMS) is the lifesaving team that responds to medical and trauma emergencies for you or your loved ones. Fire District 17 provides Medic One services with part-time paramedics from other local agencies. This is a temporary service allowed by Pierce County EMS division that will be discontinued in the near future. Currently one paid firefighter/EMT, one paramedic and 30 volunteers protect 52 square miles and over 10,000 citizens. This year they will respond to more than 1200 calls.

The citizens spoke with Initiative 747 by telling government if you need more money you must ask us. So we are asking "you" the citizens of Fire District 17 to fund the hiring of six paramedics over the next six years. Vote Yes for your Fire Department! Support the life-saving team so they can be ready to save you.

Committee Members Include: Olivia Werner, Barrie Wilcox, Becky Hoggan

Statement Against:

The Fire Department "wants" your yes vote! The current paramedic program is generating a positive income of \$94,500 after paying for Paramedic services. Revenue of \$94,500 would cover the cost of two additional Paramedic/Firefighters.

Voters passed a lid lift, which allowed the district to collect \$ 1.50 per thousand. That tax increase paid for four firefighter/EMT's, and contrary to threats by committee mailings those positions are not in jeopardy. Now they wish to collect an additional \$.50 per thousand, and you will still be billed if transported. As call volume increases transport revenue also increases making more funds available to fund additional positions, vehicles, and equipment.

The department has eliminated a half dozen qualified paid professional firefighters/paramedics who *volunteered* their time and training to the department. I question the "need" of the department when they eliminate trained volunteers.

District 17 "wants" your yes vote but is there truly a need!

Committee Members Include: T. Flowers, Committee for Fair Taxes

Rebuttal of Statement Against:

The paramedic program is currently self-sustaining. However, it was started as a temporary program, only, on a short-term variance by the County and union with direction to make the program permanent and full time. We are asking you to help us accomplish this by voting Yes! Your current EMS rate is 25 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. We are asking for an additional 25 cents incrementally over four years. *Help us help you.*

Committee Members Include: Olivia Werner, Barrie Wilcox, Becky Hoggan

Rebuttal of Statement For:

No Rebuttal was submitted.