

Pierce County

Special Election - Proposition No. 1

Submitted by Pierce County

CONTINUATION OF THE EXISTING REGULAR PROPERTY TAX LEVY RATE

Official Ballot Title: The Pierce County Council passed Resolution No. R2004-88s2 proposing to continue the existing regular property tax levy rate. If passed, Proposition No. 1 would permit Pierce County to levy for collection in 2005 the regular property tax at the rate of \$1.5545 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation of taxable property within the county, which is the same rate authorized for collection in 2004, thereby lifting the revenue limitation in Chapter 84.55 RCW. Should Proposition No. 1 be approved or rejected?

Explanatory Statement: State law imposes a 1% per year limit on increases in property tax revenues absent a vote of the people. Because property values typically increase more than 1% per year, the regular property tax levy rate has fallen in recent years due to the revenue limit. Proposition 1 would lift the 1% revenue limitation for 2005, permitting the same levy rate which was authorized in 2004 and raising more revenue than would otherwise be collected. The dollar amount of that levy would then be used to compute the revenue limitations for levies in subsequent years under Chapter 84.55 RCW.

Statement For:

How much is public safety worth to you? Under Initiative 747 (2001), we are limited to a 1% yearly increase in property tax revenue. Our Pierce County property tax rate has dropped from \$1.68 (2001) to \$1.55 (2004) per \$1000 value. Current revenue limitations from I - 747 limit the Jail to operate at 74% capacity. Because of this, 463 jail beds are empty and the Sheriff had to give early release to 459 criminals over the last 16 months. This poses increased security risks for our citizens. By passing Proposition One your property rate will stay the same for 2005, providing over \$700,000 which will be used to increase Jail staffing. Then, under existing law and current building projections, your property tax rate will continue to decrease in 2006. All additional funds generated by Proposition One will be directed to our County Jail and other public safety requirements.

Committee Members Include: Kent D. Wales, LJ Wales

Rebuttal of Statement Against:

Last year 459 criminals with convictions of burglary, car theft and drug dealing were released early to prey on you because the County couldn't afford to keep them in Jail. Hundreds of criminals were booked and released due to lack of officers to watch them. Proposition One freezes taxes at 2004 rates for one year to save Pierce County \$700,000 that will go to keep these criminals in Jail and increase your personal safety.

Committee Members Include: Kent D. Wales, LJ Wales

Statement Against:

Skyrocketing property taxes are already hurting Pierce County's sluggish economy, struggling families, and senior citizens

Pierce County already has astronomically high property taxes. Now, politicians want them even higher. We're taxed enough. Crushing property taxes, job-killing business taxes, sky-high utility taxes, and hundreds of taxes and fees on virtually every government service. Politicians, especially in Pierce, believe they can tax us into prosperity.

Voters have repeatedly demanded that politicians prioritize spending and abide by reasonable property tax limits

Politicians have repeatedly jacked up taxes and fees to their maximum levels and yet they continue to plead poverty. We're all tightening our belts - it's time for politicians to do the same. Politicians just don't get it - we don't have bottomless wallets!

Don't let politicians hold us hostage, demanding we pay their tax ransom for essential services

We all know how politicians manipulate us: they put essential services on the ballot while funding their pet projects with our existing taxes. It's the same old game with Proposition 1. Don't fall for it.

Vote no and let's demand that essential services get funded first, not last

Criminal justice is obviously the county's top priority. **Vote no** and demand they fund it with **current** revenues, not with massive tax increases. **Vote no.**

Committee Members Include: Erasmus Othieno, Erika Cranmer, Jennie Stephenson, We're Already Overtaxed

Rebuttal of Statement For:

Property taxes are skyrocketing everywhere, but especially in Pierce County. And yet, politicians continue to plead poverty, begging for even more. We're already overtaxed. It's past time for politicians to prioritize spending and use existing tax revenues more cost-effectively. Time and again, when voters reject massive tax increases, politicians find a way to provide the necessary services with existing revenues. It's the same old game with Proposition 1. Don't fall for it. **Vote No.**

Committee Members Include: Erasmus Othieno, Erika Cranmer, Jennie Stephenson, We're Already Overtaxed