

Fire Protection District No. 13 – Griffin Proposition No. 1 Levy Lid Lift

Official Ballot Title:

The Board of Fire Commissioners of Thurston County Fire Protection District No. 13 adopted Resolution No. 04-05, concerning a proposition to increase the regular property tax rate. This proposition would authorize the District to increase its regular property tax levy rate to \$1.50 per one thousand dollars of assessed value to be levied in 2004 and collected in 2005 as provided in Resolution No. 04-05.

Should this proposition be:



Approved _____ Rejected _____

Statement For:

Restore our funding so that we can help you!

Our district generates 99% of its revenue from taxes levied on the assessed value of property in our district. Our area population and new housing has been growing very rapidly. Our district services have not been able to keep up with the growth due to the 1% limitation established by Initiative 747.

We rely on our volunteers for all of our calls. We have two career fire personnel to respond during the day when volunteers are not readily available. Generally the District has trained personnel on an emergency scene within 7 minutes of a 911 call. We need funding to continue this service.

What the money will be used for...

The current fire levy tax rate is \$1.09 per thousand of assessed value on your home. The restored levy rate would be \$1.50 per thousand of assessed value. On a house with an assessed value of \$150,000 this would be an increase of \$61.50 for the tax year. This money will help to restore our services and help to provide more and better services in the years to come.

We are asking for your continued support...

The District has had wonderful support in the past from the people of our district and we are asking that you continue your support for us in the future.

*Voters' Pamphlet Statement prepared by: Skip Nichols,
Bill Durward and Jim McGarva*

Rebuttal for Statement Against:

The Fire District can't control the rising cost of insurance, fuel, personnel benefits, equipment and facility maintenance. Due to the drop in volunteer personnel and higher alarm volume, the Fire District needs to return to the former level of operations. This will also require additional personnel in the near future. The District needs a secure funding base that the Fire Commissioners can work with instead of going to the voters every few years.

Explanatory Statement:

Thurston County Fire Protection District No. 13, Griffin Fire Department, has placed a proposition on the September 14, 2004 ballot to authorize Thurston County to return the property tax levy rate to \$1.50 per \$1,000.00 of assessed valuation. The proposition is presented to voters pursuant to Initiative 747. Initiative 747 mandates that any increase in property tax revenue of more than 1% be approved by the voters. Initiative 747 limits property tax revenue to 101% of the previous year's revenue or the previous highest revenue. The statutory authorized dollar rate for junior taxing districts is \$1.50.

Approval of this proposition would allow Thurston County Fire Protection District No. 13 to maintain our present level of service to the people in our district. Rejection of the proposition will lead to a decline in services to the community.

Explanatory Statement prepared by: Griffin Fire Department

Statement Against:

Opposing Griffin Fire District's request to lift the 101% property tax lid may seem like being against motherhood and apple pie, especially since FD 13 is primarily staffed by greatly appreciated volunteers. But FD 13 has not identified exactly what the money is for and its proposal to go from a property tax levy rate of \$1.09 in the 2004 collection year to \$1.50 in 2005 will result in a 37% increase in FD 13's budget dollars. This estimate is based on the Assessor's value of the district for the 2004 collection and the \$1.50 levy rate. This increased dollar amount will become the budget base for every future year.

I am not convinced that taxing districts can survive

on a 1% budget increase each year plus the tax dollars generated from new construction. However, a 37% increase is excessive. Add to the equation this year's new construction and the fact that the Assessor is revaluing the Griffin area for the 2005 collection year and FD 13 is likely to receive far more than a 37% budget increase. If new construction approximates last year's figure and the district's value increases 15%, FD 13 stands to gain another 23% on the current year's budget for a total increase of 60%.

Fire District 13 should follow the lead of FD 12 (\$1.00 to \$1.10) – identify what they need and request a property tax lid lift for only what they need.

Voters' Pamphlet Statement prepared by: Lucille Carlson

Rebuttal for Statement For:

FD 13 receives budget dollars over the 1% limit every year for new construction. It has had only three collection years under the 1% budget limitation, yet we are being asked to fund more and better services to the tune of a budget increase of at least 37% and quite likely near 60%. FD 13 will also have a much higher budget base for years to come.