

Fire Protection District No. 6 (East Olympia) Proposition No. 1

Levy Lid Lift

The Board of Commissioners of Thurston County Fire Protection District No. 6 adopted Resolution No. 09-03 concerning a proposition to restore the District's regular property tax levy. The proposition would authorize the District to restore its regular property tax levy for operations and maintenance in two phases: \$1.14 per \$1,000 of assessed value for collection in 2010 (\$0.28 increase over 2009); set the limit factor at 132% for 2011 (\$0.36 increase over 2010) and 106% for each of the four succeeding years (not exceeding \$1.50). The 2015 levy amount shall be used to calculate subsequent levy limits.

Should this proposition be:

- Approved
 Rejected

Statement For:

The District lowered its Fire Protection Classification Rating an unprecedented 3 points.

This lower rating is validation of an effective operation. A large factor is the level of training and certifications obtained and maintained by the volunteer and career staff. Volunteers continue to provide 70% of the staffing; a very cost effective use of taxpayer dollars. The District's current levy rate was reduced to \$.86/\$1,000 due to I-747 limits of 1% growth over the prior year budget, plus the value of new construction. With significant new construction over the past 5 years, the district has been able to enhance and maintain operations even with a 45% increase in call volume. With new construction gone, they cannot sustain current levels of service.

Approval will allow the District to maintain and improve quality emergency services.

Funding will assist the District with the rising costs of operational expenses, and add one additional career firefighter position (4 firefighters) 24/7 to help ensure consistent response coverage. Funding will also expand the training facility to meet the needs of daily training and keep responders in-district and available for emergencies. It will also fund replacement equipment (radios, air-packs, bunker gear, information technology) and apparatus over the next six years, and preclude the need for Bond funding.

Approval of a two-phase levy rate increase should be virtually cost neutral.

In 2010 the rate will increase by \$.28/\$1,000. This increase should be more than offset by the insurance rate reduction. In 2011 the \$.36 currently paying for the bond (ending in 2010) would shift to the regular levy, thus should be cost neutral. The proposed \$1.50 levy rate is far less than the \$2.01 the department was collecting in 2001.

Statement prepared by: Stacey McDaniel, Chairperson; Steve McDaniel, Treasurer; and Jerry Smiley, Deputy Treasurer

Explanatory Statement:

This proposition authorizes the Fire District to implement a 2-phase levy lid lift restoring the regular property tax levy rate from \$0.86 to \$1.14 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for collection in 2010, and limits levy increases to 32% for 2011 (up to \$0.36, per 1,000 of assessed valuation) and 6% for the succeeding four years (not to exceed \$1.50 in any year), to add additional fire and EMS personnel, buy new equipment and improve training facilities.

District residents currently pay a bond levy for the purchase of vehicles and equipment which ends in 2010. By phasing in the regular levy increase to coincide with the end of the bond levy, the District hopes to partially offset the overall tax increase. A typical District resident owning a \$300,000 home will pay a total of an additional \$7.00 per month in fire district taxes beginning in 2010.

The proposition is presented to voters pursuant to State Law, which otherwise limits property tax increases to 1% more than the previous year's tax revenues, plus new construction.

Statement prepared by: Kinnon Williams, Attorney At Law Williams & Williams

Statement Against:

Fire Protection District No. 6 (East Olympia) has indicated they could not find anyone to write a statement against this proposition.

