

Dear Rodeo Hercules Fire District Board members,

Contra Costa Taxpayers Association appreciates the invitation to speak against Measure X to the Board. However, we have scheduling conflicts that preclude us from participating this evening.

We are aware that the firefighter unions back Measure X and RHFD Captain Short is a ballot signer, and we recognize that Contra Costa County has needs. That argument will never change. However, there are other current ballot measures that could increase revenue. Additionally, the County has \$35 million in unallocated funds on hand right now and will have an additional \$45 million freed up in two years after their Pension Obligation Bond is paid off.

It is unfortunate that County elections did not offer a forum for RHFD candidates or for Measure X, which would have given a good opportunity to flesh out the local impact on west county services.

After the last minute passage of SB 1349, Contra Costa County now has the ability to exceed the previous sales tax cap up to an additional 2% of which this ½% is the beginning. As the cost of living rises in the county and of California, there is less incentive for workers to reside here – those who are the life blood of the economy: the grocery workers, the store keepers, clerical workers, construction workers, small businesses, service workers, and yes, the firefighters.

With Measure X added to city and state sales tax, Contra Costa will vie for the highest sales tax in the state and much of the country.

Our position is that an increase in sales tax, after the challenges both emotional and financial of 2020, at this time is an unfair burden on Contra Costa residents, many of whom will continue to struggle for some time. There has not been a worse time for a tax increase in decades. We urge a no vote on Measure X.

Susan Pricco
President, Contra Costa Taxpayers Association