

Measure 17-67 City of Grants Pass

Referred to the People by Grants Pass City Council

17-67

Sales Tax for City Public Safety and Criminal Justice Services

Question: Shall the City eliminate the \$1.79 Property Tax Levy, eliminate the Jail Utility Fee, and implement a 2.00% sales tax?

Summary: This sales tax eliminates the local option property tax levy of \$1.79 per \$1,000 assessed value, eliminates the Jail Utility Fee, and implements a 2.00% sales tax on retail and food services starting July 1, 2016. This measure provides revenues to maintain Police and Fire Rescue services, reopens the Juvenile Justice Shelter/Detention building, increases criminal prosecution on services, and allows the City to provide at least 30 adult jail beds. Revenues from the sales tax are restricted for use in Public Safety and Criminal Justice services.

The following items are sales tax exempt: unprepared food, prescription medicine, purchase amount above \$1,000 in any single sale, business wholesale purchases, goods shipped outside Grants Pass, fuel, alcohol, and others. Provides reporting businesses a tax collection rebate to help cover reporting costs.

The sales tax rate cannot be increased without another vote of the people. Property taxes for the average city home would be reduced by approximately \$277 per year, the Jail Utility Fee would be eliminated, and sales taxes would vary based on taxable purchases.

Explanatory Statement

ELIMINATION OF LOCAL OPTION PROPERTY TAX LEVY, ELIMINATION OF JAIL SERVICE UTILITY FEES, AND REPLACE WITH SALES TAX.

This sales tax eliminated the City Local Option Property Tax Levy of \$1.79 per \$1,000 assessed value, eliminates the Jail Services Utility Fee, and implements a 2.00% sales tax on retail and food services beginning July 1, 2016. Revenues from the sales tax are restricted for City Public Safety services, Juvenile Justice services, Criminal Prosecution services, and Jail services.

WOULD MAINTAIN CURRENT POLICE AND FIRE SERVICES AND INCREASE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES. This measure would eliminate the Public Safety Local Option Property Tax Levy and would maintain current City Public Safety services including police and fire/rescue emergency responses, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, 911 and dispatch services, traffic enforcement, gang

prevention, major crimes investigations, neighborhood patrols, crime/fire prevention, school programs, drug enforcement, K-9 program, community policing, citizen public safety academy, vehicle crash and emergency medical response. The measure would also allow the City to provide jail services with at least 30 adult jail beds, increase criminal prosecution services, and reopen the juvenile Justice shelter/detention facility.

SALES TAX EXEMPTIONS AND BUSINESS REBATES. The following items are sales tax exempt: unprepared food, prescription medicine, purchase amount above \$1,000 in any single sale, goods shipped outside Grants Pass, fuel, alcohol, and many others exemptions are included. Provides all reporting businesses a tiered tax rebate of between 2% and 10% to help cover reporting costs. The small businesses tax rebate will be equal to or closer to a 10% rebate.

FUNDING FOR CITY PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES. If the measure is approved, funding would eliminate the Public Safety Local Option Property Tax Levy for approximately \$5.0 million/year, would eliminate the Jail Services utility Fee and provide approximately \$1.4 million/year for continued Jail services, provide approximately \$1.4 million/year to reopen the Juvenile Justice Shelter/Detention building, and provide approximately \$0.25 million/year to supplement Criminal Prosecution services (first year program revenue estimates). Revenues from the sales tax are restricted for use in City Police services, City Fire Rescue services, Juvenile Justice services, Criminal Prosecution services, and Jail services.

TAX IMPACTS. Property taxes for City property owners will be reduced, the City's Jail Services Utility Fee would be eliminated, and sales taxes paid would vary based on taxable purchases. Beginning in Fiscal Year 2017 (the period starting July 1, 2016) the City's local option levy of \$1.79 per \$1,000 of assessed value will be eliminated. For a single family home in Grants Pass with an average taxable assessed value of \$155,050, if the measure is approved, the property taxes for the average City home would be reduced by approximately \$277 per year. The Jail Services Utility Fee elimination would save the average home approximately \$34 per year. The sales tax rate cannot be increased without another vote of the City electorate.

A "yes" vote would be in favor of the Sales Tax. A "no" vote would be against the Sales Tax.

(This information furnished by Grants Pass City Council.)

Argument in Favor

The Joys of a Righteous Tax are about to Rain Down Upon US

The sales tax, the tax that you can usually avoid and do so quite legally!

I really do like the sales tax as a replacement for property tax. However, it only produces revenue when it is geographically widespread in its application. When two geographic areas are different in their tax policies, the taxpayer will migrate to the one most satisfactory for him. I expect the Grants Pass sales tax will be a benefit to all businesses outside the city limits, and even across the county line. If you can save an automatic 2% by going to Cave Junction, Selma, Murphy, Merlin, and Rogue River, won't you, especially if you are otherwise subsidizing a city where you don't reside?

The small business owners in Grants Pass with employees who shut down because they lose business, will all have less to spend. But we can put up with that if **we think we are soaking the nonresident.**

The city's largest property taxpayers will benefit from not continuing to pay the \$1.79 property tax levy, a savings that will not be offset by them paying sales tax on local goods at all. Think about WalMart and Fred Meyer, for example. What are their properties worth that they will now have less taxes on? Will they spend the savings on local goods? What about the local business property landlords with multiple vacancies and the speculators with unsold developments? **This sales tax will benefit the nonresident rich.** Please vote for it!

To those voting **NO**, the positions of the various city councilors are quite clear. If you choose to maintain the status quo, you should consider voting out the ones who wanted to give you 'change' and less of it! And if you vote **NO** and lose, you can always vote again, this time with your feet, when you make untaxed purchases outside the city limits.

(This information furnished by Jack Brown Jr, Josephine County Constitution Party.)

"Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument."

Argument in Favor

Yes to Safety, Yes to Justice

The Criminal Justice Sales Tax measure will keep City Police/Fire services, boost funding for adult jail services, it would reopen the Juvenile Justice shelter/detention building (closed since 2012), and would boost funding for criminal prosecution services. **All while reducing taxes and fees for City residents and businesses.** The property tax reduction built into this measure and the jail services utility fee elimination means big savings for both residents and businesses. Many local businesses will save thousands of dollars per year as a result.

The measure also has unique provisions that you don't normally see in a sales tax program.

These unique provisions help make this local sales tax program more accountable and fair to both businesses and consumers:

- ✓ The 2% rate cannot be raised without another vote of the people
- ✓ There is not tax on many items like unprepared food, prescription medicine, fuel, and many others
- ✓ The 2% tax is capped at the first \$1,000 of sale amount in each transaction (therefore, even if you buy a new car, the most the sales tax can ever be is \$20)
- ✓ There is a tax rebate to help businesses cover the cost of reporting

The rate is low enough to reduce the negative affect on local businesses...that's the last thing that anyone wants. The 2% and the \$1000 cap is designed so that it wouldn't pay to go to Medford rather than shop locally. Think about the various times that you planned a vacation or recreational trip...was a sales tax rate for the place you were going to visit part of your decision making process? Nope, this won't affect our thriving tourism industry either.

Vote with your conscience, **vote with your wallet, and vote yes** for the criminal justice sales tax.

It's the right thing to do to restore justice services and reduce taxes and fees for Grants Pass residents and businesses.

(This information furnished by Dan DeYoung, Tax Payers for a Better Grants Pass.)

"Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument."

Argument in Favor

Restore Justice/Safety Services and Lower Your Taxes

The City of Grants Pass relies partly on Josephine County's Criminal Justice System which is underfunded. As our Public Safety Chief says, we can have a cop on every corner but it won't do any good unless the rest of the system is available – the adult jail, juvenile justice, and prosecution services. The Criminal Justice Sales Tax on the ballot for Grants Pass voters this November could restore funding to the justice services the City relies on, retain our current level of services in City Police and City Fire services, while lowering taxes and fees for Grants Pass residents and businesses.

Sound too good to be true? It's not. Rather than tie all fees for public safety and justice services to property taxes and utility fees, the very low 2% sales tax spreads the burden among everyone that uses the system rather than just those that live within the City of Grants Pass.

This Sales Tax will provide enough revenue to eliminate the City's \$1.79 Public Safety Property Tax Levy and maintain City Police and Fire services. It will also provide enough revenue to eliminate the City's jail services utility fee and provide extra funding to County Criminal Justice services.

A home with an average assessed value of about \$155,000 will save about \$311 per year from this tax and fee reduction. If your assessed value is \$250,000 your household would see a tax and fee reduction of about \$482 per year. Do the math on how many taxable items you would have to purchase to even come close to these amounts and you'll find this is a big tax/fee reduction for Grants Pass residents and businesses.

The measure retains current City Police/Fire services while boosting funding for criminal justice services. The money can't be spent on anything except public safety and criminal justice services. **Vote yes to restore justice and lower your taxes/fees.**

(This information furnished by Tom Brandes.)

"Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument."

Argument in Favor

Save 30% on city property taxes and even a bit more including ending of the jail bed utility fee. How can that be?

Public Safety involves four essential activities: Police, Jail, Juvenile Justice & Prosecution. Grants Pass has benefited from a well staffed and professional police force. However, the other 3 services have been depleted because of lack of funding at the county level. Your City Council took measures to mitigate the impact of lack of jail space by contracting for up to 30 beds at the County Jail. Also, an updated property tax levy has been needed for several years to supplement funding for Public Safety. One hundred percent of property taxes goes to public safety. Together with the levy and Jail Bed Utility Fee, the residents have been better served, but not fully.

It is time to realize that sufficient county funding is not going to be realized in the foreseeable future. The city is now faced with the responsibility of ensuring that all four activities receive sufficient funding to meet city needs. "Take the burden off property tax payers" has been heard. Your City Council looked into alternative funding. The result of extensive analysis is a proposal for a small retail sales tax in Grants Pass. A mere 2% tax will provide sufficient funding for city Public Safety needs. And, it will allow the levy to be eliminated as well as the city jail bed utility fee. That is how it is possible to achieve a 30% reduction in property taxes. Thirty jail beds, opening the Juvenile Justice Center and contracting for an additional DA will be made possible by the Public Safety Sales Tax. It makes sense to do this.

Do not be misled by false claims or incomplete information. Verify the facts at:

<http://www.grantspassoregon.gov/917/Elections-Information>

Vote YES on 17-67

(This information furnished by Roy Lindsay, Tax Payers for a Better Grants Pass.)

"Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument."

Argument in Opposition

Reasons Responsible Citizens Should Vote - NO - On 17-67, The Proposed Sales Tax

* The way the City Council instructed their attorney to write this measure leaves too much room for their manipulation. **Without a vote of the people the Council can change the types of goods and services to be taxed.** This is of great concern. Measure 17-67 is very poorly written.

Also, without a vote of the people, this or a future city council can bring back the water bill fee in any amount they choose.

It is permanent and if enacted, we will have no ability to change, evaluate, or modify it.

* A Grants Pass Only Sales Tax Will Devastate Many Local Businesses - Large and Small

Being the only city in Oregon with a sales tax will practically guarantee that people will buy more whenever they are outside of GP city limits. When people are in Medford they will buy more to avoid the GP tax - it's human nature. Also, folks who live halfway between here and Medford or Roseburg will likely avoid shopping in Grants Pass altogether.

Even a 5 or 10% reduction in sales will be more than some businesses can absorb. This will cause them to go under, creating more vacancies and higher unemployment - horrible for the local economy and property values.

* The Proposed Sales Tax Is Unfairly Structured

The City Council conveniently made sure that businesses the councilors and mayor are personally involved with would be sales tax exempt.

Plus, all ten of the city's largest property taxpayers would no longer pay the \$1.79 public safety levy and all of them have businesses that will be sales tax exempt. Instead, **lower income working people and fixed income seniors** will be forced to pay the tab for public safety by paying a sales tax.

* Vote NO on 17-67. It's Bad For Grants Pass And Is Very Poorly Written.

(This information furnished by Rob Pell.)

"Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument."

Argument in Opposition

Vote No

And, save our Grants Pass Businesses from this **Permanent, Unfair and Bias** City Sales Tax.

Sales Taxes are Permanent, and will never go away once in place. Compared to a Temporary Levy, which does expire.

Is it fair to tax all Grants Pass Restaurants, Deli's, Drive-thought's and Lunch Wagons, even when delivered? **This tax is forcing the population to eat at home,** rather than dining out.

Is it fair to the small businesses to be forced to pay their 2% Sales Tax on every item sold under \$1,000.00? Yes, even large businesses with high dollar items will loose sales.

Is it fair to make large and small businesses account for every Taxable item sold? **All businesses will have their books audited by the city?**

Is it fair to lay the tax burden only on some of the Grants Pass Businesses?

How many of the seven Task Force members will be exempt? Most, if not all of them will be exempt from paying the Grants Pass Sales Tax, which they recommended.

The Grants Pass City Council approved this tax, even through the opposition clearly out weighed their decision. **Why?**

Will the Josephine County Residents, that work in Medford, do their shopping in, Grants Pass? **NO, I Do Not Think So!**

Measure 17-67 does not address or cover the **bureaucratic administration of the Cities Sales Tax. The City Council will Define and Administer every aspect of this measure 17-67 after the voters approve it. Yes After Its Approved,** the voters will not know what they just voted on, and neither will the effected businesses until July 1, 2016.

Business owners will not be adequately compensated for keeping track of this Tax and they will be subject to government audit at any time.

What happens if this Tax fails to raise enough revenue? California collects Billions in Taxes why are they broke?

Vote No Too Increasing The Size of City Government

(This information furnished by Jim Rossi.)

"Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument."

Argument in Opposition

Vote No City Sale Tax

If the revenue from this proposed City Sales Tax is only going to fund only what the measure states, then where does the money come from to set-up and administer this new governmental function? The Grants Pass General Fund? If so where does the General Fund receive its money? How can the General Fund, afford to fund this New Bureaucratic Sales Tax Administration for ever?

Measure 17-67 has so many problems with it, there isn't enough room to list them all.

The Ballot Question is misleading. The utility fee (tax) is schedules to sunset on June 30, 2016. The day before the City Sales Tax will take effect, if passed.

The word Permanent is missing in the measure. A Sales Tax Is Permanent, just ask anyone who's from a city with one.

Grocery stores and other businesses must collect Sales Tax on some items and not others.

Its unfair to the Josephine County residents, by forcing them to pay for Grants Pass Public Safety, while the City Property owners get property tax relief.

Its cheating Grants Pass Public Safety out of revenue secured by the levy passed in 2013 for \$1.79 per \$1000 assessed value.

Measure 17-67 does not include any definitions or administration policies, which will be determined after the November 2015 vote, by the Grants Pass City Council.

The Grants Pass City Council thinks penalizing City Businesses, is thinking outside the box, while some businesses are still struggling.

No Business wants the burden of being a Tax Collector! Some will move, quit or eat the Sales Tax. Others will just pass it on to their customers.

This City Sales Tax has the potential of being a bureaucratic nightmare for Grants Pass Businesses. Measure 17-67 is a Bad Measure. Ask the Grants Pass Chamber of Commerce, and any down town businesses.

This Time Vote No

(This information furnished by Matt Jackson.)

"Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument."

Argument in Opposition

Is The Grants Pass Sales Tax, A Fair Tax? NO

Voters, do you think its fair that city business owners living outside of Grants Pass have no vote?

Voters, do you think it's fair that county residents will have to pay a City Sales Tax to shop here?

Voters, do you think its fair that the additional cost to businesses collecting and accounting for the Sales Tax? Their rebate % does not even come close to minimum wage!

Voters, do you think it's fair to put Grants Pass businesses at a disadvantage over businesses just outside the City limits?

Voters, do you really think its fair of you to impose a destructive sales tax on yourself and local businesses? To gain what? You're trading two taxes that are going to expire anyway for a permanent Sales Tax. Why?

Voters, remember you have passed a number of Public Safety Property Tax Levies in the past, to protect city residents and businesses, and only when levies were needed as a temporary Tax. This City Sales Tax is not the answer.

Vote No, To an Un-Fair Tax

Question to all Grants Pass voters; Why would anyone vote for any measure written to deceive the voters? Read the measures Question. It removes the result of your voting for the 2013 Levy by cutting it short for this Sales Tax. It also states that it will eliminate the utility tax. But, you know, it expires the day before this Sales Tax becomes law. Its written so that you will vote for it. That's deception.

Don't be deceived, Vote No

Paid by Bill Waggoner, Chairman of the 9/12 Project

(This information furnished by Bill Waggoner, 9/12 Project.)

"Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument."

Josephine County Voters' Pamphlet

Special Election November 3, 2015



Art Harvey, ccc
Josephine County Clerk

Josephine County Official Ballot Drop Site Locations

Open from October 15, 2015 until 8 pm, November 3, 2015

Josephine County Courthouse:

The County Clerk's Office (7:50 am-5:00 pm, Mon.-Fri.) *Open 7 am until 8 pm on election day*

Justice Building Side, ground floor next to the elevator (24 hours / 7 days)

Next to the "C" Street Entrance (Tax Office entrance) (24 hours / 7 days)

Drive-up Ballot Drop:

Parking lot behind library. Enter from "C" Street (24 hours / 7 days)

Merlin:

Umpqua Bank, Merlin Rd. & Monument Dr., parking lot (24 hours / 7 days)

Murphy:

Hidden Valley Market, in front, on the left side of the building (24 hours / 7 days)

South G.P.:

Washington Federal, 290 Union Ave., front parking lot (24 hours / 7 days)

Voter Registration Information

Information for the November 3, 2015 Special Election

To be eligible to vote in the November 3, 2015 election, a completed voter registration card must be on file with the Josephine County Clerk by October 13, 2015.

YOU MAY REGISTER TO VOTE IF:

1. You are a citizen of the United States.
2. You are at least 17 years of age.
3. You are a resident of Oregon.

YOU MUST UPDATE YOUR REGISTRATION IF:

1. Your residence or mailing address changes.
2. Your name changes.
3. You wish to change party affiliation.

Voter registration cards can be obtained from any county elections office, most post offices, some state agencies, and are posted on the web at: www.oregonvotes.gov.

For information about registration and voting contact:

Art Harvey, Josephine County Clerk and Recorder
P.O. Box 69, Grants Pass, OR 97528-0203 • www.co.josephine.or.us / (541) 474-5243
Hearing Impaired Voters May Use TDD RelayLine - 1-800-735-2900

Voting Instructions

At the November 3, 2015 Special Election the voters of Josephine County should cast their votes as illustrated below.

TO VOTE YOU MUST COMPLETELY FILL IN THE OVAL (●) TO THE LEFT OF YOUR RESPONSE.

TO WRITE-IN A NAME - FILL IN THE OVAL (●) TO THE LEFT OF THE LINE AND WRITE-IN THE NAME ON THE LINE.

TO VOTE ON A MEASURE OR CANDIDATE ON THE BALLOT, SIMPLY FILL IN THE OVAL COMPLETELY NEXT TO THE YES OR NO OR CANDIDATE'S NAME.

EXAMPLES:	Or Write In
<input type="radio"/> PRESIDENT VOTE FOR ONE	<input type="radio"/> PRESIDENT VOTE FOR ONE
<input type="radio"/> JOHN ALLEN	<input type="radio"/> JOHN ALLEN
<input checked="" type="radio"/> THOMAS JEFFERSON	<input type="radio"/> THOMAS JEFFERSON
<input type="radio"/> J. Q. PUBLIC	<input type="radio"/> J. Q. PUBLIC
<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> <i>Billy Kidd</i>
Measure	<input type="radio"/> YES <input checked="" type="radio"/> YES
	<input type="radio"/> NO <input checked="" type="radio"/> NO

IF YOU VOTE FOR MORE CANDIDATES THAN ALLOWED, OR IF YOU VOTE BOTH YES AND NO ON A MEASURE, IT IS CALLED AN OVERVOTE. YOUR VOTE **WILL NOT COUNT** FOR THAT CANDIDATE OR MEASURE.

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO VOTE ON ALL CONTESTS. THOSE YOU DO VOTE ON WILL STILL BE COUNTED.

IF YOU CHANGE YOUR CHOICE, SPOIL YOUR BALLOT OR LOSE IT, CONTACT THE COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE AT (541) 474-5243.

-Returning Your Voted Ballot-

Vote your ballot.

Fold the ballot and insert it into the secrecy envelope.

Seal the secrecy envelope and insert into colored return envelope.

Seal the colored return envelope and sign the statement on the back of the envelope.

Your ballot will not be counted if your envelope is not signed.

Place the appropriate first class postage on the return envelope and mail it so that it is received in the Josephine County Clerk's Office or at an Official Ballot Drop Site location (no postage required) no later than 8:00 pm November 3, 2015.

IMPORTANT: YOUR BALLOT WILL NOT BE COUNTED IF IT IS NOT RECEIVED BY 8:00 PM NOVEMBER 3, 2015.

Argument in Opposition

We're for A Constitutional Government Recommends A Decisive No Vote

Public Safety Sales Tax Measure 17-67 is penalizing the City of Grants Pass Businesses, in more ways than one.

Passage of the above Measure will ensure a negative change in Grants Pass, as you are probably aware.

If passed, the Grants Pass City Council will be responsible to define how Measure 17-67 is implemented and applied. Most likely done through numerous City Ordinances. This process will be done without voters approval, and must be complete prior to July 1, 2016.

City Councils task will be very complex. Creating a business tax collection department (or something equivalent) and the procedures the department(s) will follow. Like exceptions, business-to-business transactions, resale certificates, garage sale permits etc.

Did you know, Grants Pass City Council can vote in another utility fee (tax) at anytime and probably could have voted in a City Sales Tax. Which might happen if measure 17-67 fails at the polls.

Remember Sales Tax attempts have been done before, and have all failed. This attempt is different in many ways.

Measure 17-67 states it will eliminate previous taxes. Wrong the utility tax is do to end just before July 1, 2016 and the \$1.79 levy will end in 2018, less than two years after.

Sales Taxes are estimated to net over eight million dollars. But the expense of running the Sales Tax program is said to be paid from your Grants Pass General Fund forever, because, 17-67 states that all monies collected will go to its intended use, minus the percentage given back to the businesses for collecting Sales Tax, so it isn't 100%.

This is not thinking outside the box, it's a smoke-n-mirror dodge to persuade the city voters. The best way to stave-off the grief and the bureaucratic nightmare the Grants Pass Businesses are facing, is To Vote No on Measure 17-67.

For more up to date information log-on to w4acg.com

(This information furnished by James Rafferty, We're for a Constitutional Government.)

Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument.

Argument in Opposition

We are very concerned with the negative impact measure 17-67 will have on local business in Grants Pass, and how it will affect the local economy. Should Grants Pass become the only city in the state of Oregon to pass a sales tax, it would put every retail business and restaurant at an unfair disadvantage with every other business in the state, and every website in the world. Business will drop in Grants Pass.

The City estimates the sales tax will raise \$8 million dollars, which will be offset by the elimination of the Property Tax Levy and of the Jail Utility Fee. We believe with reduced business, much less will be collected, and the City will be worse off than it is now. Measure 17-67 is written so that the city council can add to the types of goods and services subject to taxation. The City would have to tax more items if revenue doesn't meet the projected estimates of their "experts".

The City manager made his argument for a sales tax on the premise that Grants Pass is geographically isolated, and that Josephine County shoppers would not drive to Medford to save 2%. He totally missed the flipside: to survive, many businesses need customers from neighboring counties to travel to Grants Pass to shop. Many tourists from out of state like to shop in Oregon tax-free. If Grants Pass becomes the city of sales tax, they will likely shop ANYWHERE ELSE. It will be hard to attract any new businesses to Grants Pass, since they would be handicapped from the get-go. Real Estate values will go down, since who will want to move to THE ONLY CITY IN OREGON WITH A SALES TAX?

Measures 17-67 is shortsighted and dangerous. While the city council only sees dollars to spend, we see shuttered storefronts and a devastated local economy. Measure 17-67 is a disaster for Grants Pass.

Frank Wright and Roy Heinzel

The Kitchen Company

(This information furnished by Frank Wright, The Kitchen Company.)

Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument.

Argument in Opposition

Reject Measure 17-67, Says Local Radio Station Owner

Why am I opposing Measure 17-67 and a permanent new sales tax for Grants Pass? Well, you don't have to tell someone who owns a Grants Pass radio station that the local economy is still struggling. We report it in our news stories, we see it in our community. Our Grants Pass economy isn't all it could be, or what it used to be. People and businesses are struggling. That's especially true for folks on fixed-incomes or low-income workers. I think a \$1.6 million a year tax increase in the form of permanent new sales tax will be bad for our local economy and local residents.

I urge Grants Pass voters in the strongest terms to say "no" to this new 2% sales Tax. Grants Pass is not an island unto itself. This \$1.6 million-a-year tax hike will put a damper on demand for goods and services from our local businesses. Customers can and will take their business to nearby businesses where there's no local sales tax. Measure 17-67 will put our local stores at a competitive disadvantage. A 2% tax might not seem like much to some of our officials, but it can mean the difference between profitability and unprofitability for local businesses if people shop elsewhere and it sure can mean a lot for someone on a fixed income.

Another big problem - Measure 17-67 would allow the City Council to expand the rosters of products and services subject to the 2% sales tax – all without a vote of the people.

Please vote against Measure 17-67.

Carl Wilson

Owner Grants Pass Broadcasting Corp.

(This information furnished by Carl Wilson, Grants Pass Broadcasting Corporation.)

Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument.

Argument in Opposition

The proposed Grants Pass sales tax measure being put before city voters on the upcoming November ballot would cause more problems than it would solve for our community.

I do not support any kind of sales tax being implemented in the city of Grants Pass as an answer to solve our funding problems.

The Hospitality Industry has been absolutely battered and bruised by state and federal laws that have made it extremely difficult to continue operating in Oregon with any level of success. Already thin margins are being wiped out with the addition of legislation such as The Affordable Care Act, an upcoming Mandatory Sick Leave law and a major increase in the minimum wage.

The implementation of a sales tax will only add to the burden of trying to operate profitably. I can assure you that when the playing field becomes unbalanced via a sales tax in the city there will be those who will make their decisions to spend their money elsewhere. There will be those who will choose to spend their money in the county and others who, while traveling up and down the freeway, will simply bypass Grants Pass. I have no doubt that knowledge of the fact that Grants Pass has a sales tax will spread throughout the state. I believe that the city underestimates the amount of people in Oregon who, no matter what the tax is, are philosophically opposed to paying any sales tax.

A combination of a significant increase in the cost of doing business coupled with any downturn in revenue will spell disaster for our industry and other small businesses in Grants Pass. At a time when the local economy is still fragile, imposing a tax that would discourage consumer spending in Grants Pass is sending the wrong message. We do not need a tax that inhibits business and encourages our neighbors and visitors to go elsewhere to spend their hard-earned dollars.

(This information furnished by Dave Thomason, Eimers-Taprock NW Grill-Human Beans.)

Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument.

Argument in Opposition

Measure 17-67 Will Hurt My Restaurant and My Customers

One thing about the restaurant business is that people have choices when it comes to eating. I always remember that at my Grants Pass restaurant. Hungry customers can walk to the place up the street or drive to spot in the next town over. Or, they can stay home and eat. That's why I cannot understand what the City Council is doing asking us to approve Measure 17-67's new, permanent 2% sales tax to fund public safety.

It's hard enough running a restaurant when the economy is still struggling, but Measure 17-67 would put a restaurant like mine – and other Grants Pass businesses – at a competitive disadvantage. My customers could very well decide to drive to other places in neighboring communities that don't have a 2% sales tax or stay home. Believe me, price matters to today's customer, particularly to those on fixed incomes.

Why would you want to make it harder for local businesses like mine to get by? Why does the council want to increase costs for fixed-income and/or low-income Grants Pass workers? Aren't things tough enough without adding a \$1.6 million tax increase that will depress demand for goods and services from local businesses – including my restaurant?

The only thing I can figure is that they want another permanent tax to increase in addition to property taxes. But this is no way to fund public safety. Measure 17-67's 2% sales tax includes no provision to reduce or eliminate the tax if other public safety funding comes available. Worse, it would let our City Council add to the list of goods and services that can be taxed without a vote of the people.

I support our local public safety and want to see our town thrive; measure 17-67 will not support growth and success in business. That's why I'm voting against Measure 17-67 and urge you to do likewise.

Tina Gotchall,

Owner Powderhorn Café

(This information furnished by Tina Gotchall, Powderhorn Cafe LLC.)

Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument.

Argument in Opposition

Measure 17-67 the 2% city sales tax is a new tax that I cannot support in the current form for various reasons.

1. This new tax gives property owners like myself a tax break at the expense of those citizens who cannot afford to own property. Approximately 50% of Grants Pass residents rent their homes. These individuals will have no safety levy tax savings and will have the added expense of sales tax.
2. This new sales tax places a burden on just one sector of our economy, the retail trade (to be more equitable and a lower percentage, all industries should participate).
3. We rely on our Jackson County clientele to keep us in the black and I fear any sales tax could present a deterrent in making the drive to Grants Pass. It is a small tax but a psychological barrier. If we choose to absorb this tax at 2% for our buyers we would reduce our bottom line by 30-40%. We strive for a 5% bottom line profit.
4. I am not a fan of bigger government and I really fear for the costs in administering and auditing this new tax.

Please join me in voting NO on measure 17-67.

Sincerely Giff Gates, Gates Furniture Grants Pass Oregon

(This information furnished by John Giffin Gates, Gates Furniture.)

Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument.

Argument in Opposition

We all want to live in a safe and prosperous community, but the Grants Pass City Council has erred badly in asking voters to add a new – and permanent – 2% sales tax to fund public safety programs. The council has unwisely pitched safety against prosperity in asking voters to approve the Measure 17-67 sales tax in this election. This is a disservice to Grants Pass residents and our small businesses.

Adding a brand new local sales tax to our property tax is a bad idea, even if the goal is to fund public safety programs. Another permanent tax is not what Grants Pass needs today, particularly a sales tax that the City Council could expand to additional products and services without a vote of the people.

The \$1.6 million-a-year tax increase in this sales tax proposal would hurt our local economy, which continues to struggle. Grants Pass businesses are trying to grow demand for their goods and services. We're not asking the City Council to help. We're simply asking it not to hurt local merchants by depressing consumer demand for our wares or putting us at a competitive disadvantage with merchants in communities without sales taxes. Measure 17-67 would do all that.

This new, permanent sales tax would make things tougher for customers, many of whom are low-income or getting by on fixed incomes. A 2% increase in Grants Pass prices, on top of regular price increases, would really hurt them – and, ultimately, our businesses.

I know public officials often have to make tough choices. I get that. But asking voters to either approve a permanent new sales tax or risk our public safety is a false choice. Grants Pass voters should refuse this false choice and reject the Measure 17-67 sales tax.

Lowell Gibson

Owner, Recognition Specialties

Past President – Grants Pass/Josephine County Chamber of Commerce

(This information furnished by Lowell Gibson, Recognition Specialties.)

Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument.

Argument in Opposition

My customers can't afford a permanent new local sales tax, and neither can my Grants Pass business

My shop sells fabrics & vacuums in downtown Grants Pass. We love serving our customers, but running a small business is always a challenge. The competition is everywhere, thanks to the internet, and the big box stores. It's better these days but still not great, especially our local economy. That's why I'm doing something I've never done before – writing to my fellow Grants Pass voters and asking you to consider all your local small businesses and our customers when you vote on Measure 17-67.

Measure 17-67 is not the right way to fund public-safety programs in our community. A new and permanent 2% sales tax would put our local businesses at a competitive disadvantage with businesses in neighboring communities without sales taxes. Our customers become more price-sensitive each year. Many are fixed-income seniors and other working low-income residents in Grants Pass. This permanent new sales tax will increase their costs. That's not good for them, and that's not good for the local Grants Pass businesses we would like them to patronize. Our local economy is already struggling. Measure 17-67 is a tax increase of \$1.6 million. It will just make it worse by discouraging demand for goods and services from local businesses. People who already have appointments in Medford will intentionally spend more money while they are there.

Beyond its harm to local businesses and our customers, Measure 17-67 would create a permanent new sales tax – in addition the property tax – and allow the Grants Pass City Council to add to the list of a lot of items that can be taxed without a vote of the people.

My love for this town and our great local business is more important than my wallet. Please join me in voting against Measure 17-67 to stop this local sales tax while you can.

Rick Chapman
Owner Plaza Sewing, Quilting & Vacuum Center

(This information furnished by Rick Chapman, Plaza Sewing, Quilting & Vacuum Center.)

Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument.

Argument in Opposition

From Your Chamber of Commerce

Please vote "no" on Measure 17-67 to stop the local sales tax – that's my message on behalf of the Grants Pass Chamber of Commerce. As the chamber's President/CEO, I can tell you it's not always easy to find a consensus among our members. We're a diverse group of strong-minded businessmen and women. We represent more than 500 businesses of varying size, and we have to be strong-minded to survive in today's economy. The message from members is that they want voters to know that Measure 17-67 is a bad idea for Grants Pass – bad for local taxpayers, bad for local businesses and our customers. How?

- 1) Measure 17-67 would create a permanent new sales tax and allow the Grants Pass City Council to add to the goods and services that can be taxed without a vote of the people.
- 2) Measure 17-67 would give city officials another permanent tax to increase in addition to property taxes.
- 3) This new 2% sales tax would put our local businesses at a competitive disadvantage with businesses in neighboring communities without sales taxes.
- 4) Measure 17-67's permanent new sales tax will increase costs for fixed-income seniors and low-income workers.
- 5) Our local economy is already struggling. Measure 17-67 is a tax increase of \$1.6 million. This will make our economy worse by discouraging demand for goods and services from local businesses.

The Grants Pass Chamber of Commerce has always cared about adequate funding for public safety. Our members know a safe community is good for our businesses and customers. But, for reasons above, Measure 17-67 – a new and permanent sales tax that can be expanded without a vote of the people - is a bad way to fund public safety programs.

Please vote "NO" on Measure 17-67 and stop the local sales tax.

Colene Martin
President/CEO Grants Pass & Josephine County Chamber of Commerce

(This information furnished by Colene Martin, Grants Pass & Josephine County Chamber of Commerce.)

Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument.

Argument in Opposition

Fellow Local Voters,

The Grants Pass City Council's Measure 17-67 is an open checkbook. A NO vote on Measure 17-67 is the only way to keep an Oregon state zero sales tax culture in our city.

Measure 17-67 would cripple an already struggling Grants Pass economy:

- Measure 17-67 would create a permanent new sales tax.
- Measure 17-67 would allow the Grants Pass City Council to expand the list of taxable items without a vote of the people.
- Measure 17-67 would give city officials unlimited power to increase sales tax without a vote of the people.
- Every expansion should be voted on by the local voters not decided by city officials.
- Measure 17-67 does not restrict city officials from reinstating property taxes at any level they wish.
- Measure 17-67 does not restrict potential sales tax on property sales.
- There is no itemized budget or detailed plan for the use of the taxes created by Measure 17-67.
- Measure 17-67 will put our local businesses at a competitive disadvantage with businesses in neighboring communities without sales tax.
- Lost revenue will lead to increased prices ultimately creating inflation in our local economy.
- The local tourism economy in Grants Pass is seasonal and is usually greatly decreased in winter months. There would be no potential revenue stream for approximately six months of the year from Tourism.
- Measure 17-67 is short sighted and will harm our local economy. Less revenue by local businesses will lead to higher costs and cuts in staffing.

Vote NO on Measure 17-67 and STOP the local Sales Tax.

(This information furnished by Ron Clack, Lithia's Grants Pass Auto Center.)

Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument.

Argument in Opposition

Sales Tax will be a Disaster for Grants Pass Business!

Imagine for a moment that Medford votes in a sales tax. Next day all newspapers in Oregon will carry the front-page headline "ONLY CITY IN OREGON TO HAVE A RETAIL SALES TAX!" Southern Oregon businesses will be advertising "Come to our town, we don't have a sales tax!"

- Local sales will drop, as shoppers bundle purchases when in other cities.
- Businesses will be forced to lay off employees or even close.

Sales Tax will increase City bureaucracy!

- New dept. created, more employees, benefits, PERS, paperwork.
- Businesses will be subject to an Audit any time. Substantial penalties, even if the business owner makes an honest mistake. Examples: nuts are exempt, unless they are honey-roasted. Garage sales that happen more than four days a year will have to register with the City and collect sales tax.
- Sales Tax is a bureaucratic dream and a business nightmare!
VOTE NO
- Sales Tax Revenue is a Guesstimate!
 - Comparables used to guesstimate the revenue were cities in Washington State with substantially higher income per person, meaning more disposable income.
 - City Council never asked the Task Force "Is this a good idea?" Never did a poll to see if people wanted a sales tax. Didn't survey businesses.
 - If the revenue is not sufficient, more businesses can be forced to add sales tax. City Council can bring back the jail utility fee, without your vote.

What happened to job creation?

- People without jobs or low-incomes can't afford more taxes.
- We've gone for years without a plan to create good jobs.
- Vote NO--leave the current levy in place—tell the Council to focus on job creation!
- Get more information:
www.GrantsPassOregon.com

(This information furnished by Toni Webb.)

Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument.

Argument in Opposition

Don't be deceived. Just Vote NO!

Consider the following:

>**The Jail Utility Fees sunset automatically the day before the Sales Tax goes into effect!** Your vote will not eliminate them. They deceptively included this as bait to get you to pass the measure.

>**This Sales Tax is PERMANENT!** They purposely did not include a sunset date in the measure.

Mark Bartholomew, the City Attorney, testified in Court that the City Council could have implemented this Sales Tax without a vote of the people; however it would be politically difficult to do so. **They want your vote for expediency.**

>If City people don't want to pay the \$1.79 Property Tax Levy, simply vote NO when it's up for renewal in a couple of years. The levy sunsets automatically on June 30, 2018. **Don't exchange a limited two years of property taxes for a never ending Sales Tax!**

>In the *Voters' Pamphlet*, November 5, 2013, Richard Michelon, retired CPA and former City Councilor, wrote:

"The City's Statement that 'the Levy would only fund police and fire' is UNTRUE." We've had 4 years of the \$1.79 supplemental tax levy: **half of it went for discretionary spending and doubling the City's general fund bank account."**

From this past behavior, **do you really trust the City to dedicate the Sale Tax money to Public Safety and Criminal Justice services?**

>County people are overwhelmingly opposed to this Sales Tax. It will not force them to pay for these City services. **County and Out-of-State people will simply shop elsewhere.** If you think businesses look sparse along 6th Street now, just wait until a Sales Tax goes into effect. **You will be harming your City far more than you will be punishing the County!**

>Only the City electorate will vote on this. It could pass by a small, simple majority if you don't get out and **VOTE to actively defeat this permanent Sales Tax.**

Don't be manipulated. **Vote NO on Measure 17-67.**

(This information furnished by Sandi Cassanelli.)

Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument.

Argument in Opposition

In other states that have sales taxes, they never go away. They only get higher. As a County we have rejected Tax Levies on multiple occasions, going down to defeat by large margins. The City indicated they could put this tax on without voter approval but thought it would not be wise politically. So they chose to put it on the ballot and let only the City residents vote on it.

We must realize that a sales tax will affect our businesses. We all know how many empty storefronts we see everyday now. Most everyone that lives in Josephine County shops in the City of Grants Pass. The Rural residents however, are used to driving further distances and will likely take their shopping needs to Medford, and just add the items they normally shop for in Grants Pass to their shopping lists for Medford.

In exchange the City says it will lift the previously voted upon Local Option City Public Safety Tax (which expires in 2018 anyway) and the Jail tax (which they call a fee) currently on the sewer bills. This shows you two things. You voted on the first one and they can lift it any time. You didn't vote on the second one and you still got billed for it. If in the future, the 2% Sales tax proves not to be enough, they will raise it.

There are no promises about the exemptions either. There are many of them now. But will they begin to eliminate exemptions? The City has pretty much a free hand to raise taxes. And they can change what businesses are exempt from that tax as well.

Does Grants Pass want to be known as the only City in Oregon with a Sales Tax? Since the City can institute this tax without a vote, they can certainly raise it without a vote.

(This information furnished by Vivian Kirkpatrick-Pilger, Josephine County Republican Women.)

Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument.

Argument in Opposition

The people of Grants Pass must reject the proposed permanent sales tax so we won't get overtaxed like our neighbors in California. The California sales tax began in 1933 at 2.5% and now is 10% in some cities. California also has a high property tax and high income tax. **Why bring this on ourselves?**

The proposed 2% sales tax exempts over 70% of the businesses in Grants Pass. These sales tax exemptions can be removed in the future with a simple majority of the city council without putting it before the voters. This could triple the number of businesses subject to the sales tax. You could pay the sales tax every time you go to the barber, the hairdresser or get your estate plan updated at your local attorney. **Can you afford this?**

Once in place the sales tax rate of 2% can be increased in future elections. There is no limit to how high the sales tax rate can go. This means an "affordable sales tax" now may become an unaffordable tax burden in the future. Why take the risk?

No other city in Oregon has a retail sales tax. Let's not make Grants Pass be the first.

Please vote "No!" on this permanent and risky sales tax.

Richard Emmons
City of Grants Pass Resident

(This information furnished by Richard Emmons.)

Measure arguments are printed as submitted. The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Josephine County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument.