

The Orange County Republican Party

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Press Release **For Immediate Release**

Orange County Taxpayers Getting Half The Story On November Tax Hike Initiative, Says OC GOP Chair Randall

Chapel Hill, NC - October 3, 2011 - On November 8 of this year a ballot initiative will be put forth for a vote from Orange County voters to increase the sales tax by ¼ cent. "This tax increase was handily defeated just this past election cycle in November 2010" says Orange County GOP Chair, Bob Randall and Randall is perplexed as to why the County is trying yet again.

"Running this referendum in a municipal and off-year election is a ruse" continued Randall and he is certain that the County leaders would do better to manage the money they have rather than come hat-in-hand looking for more. "American and Orange County taxpayers are all squeezed in ways they haven't experienced since the 1930's and money is tight; households are living on budgets and the County can too."

Many County voters are also perplexed as to why the County has allocated \$50,000 this year for a 'Voter Education Campaign' - \$10,00 more than they spent in the 2010 election - to push the measure. "The County, by law, is not allowed to advocate on issues such as this" said Randall, "yet they have utilized taxpayer's money to send emails and letters home to county students' parents and produced an on-line video. They are only telling half of the story." Randall went on to question that if this County push is to 'educate voters' then why have opposing groups not been given equal access, airtime or budget to reach out to those same county voters.

Penny Rich, co-chairwoman of the committee supporting the tax hike and a Chapel Hill Town Council member, said the group wasn't satisfied by education about the tax last year. "Penny Rich 'wasn't satisfied'? I think if Ms. Rich, an elected official in this County, must not know much about elections. People study issues and candidates and vote items and people in or out. We voted the tax increase out! End of story."

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Mark Marcoplos, a member of the Orange County Planning Board, believes he understands the tax's benefits, but said the information provided by the county isn't detailed or transparent enough. "The number of questions I have right now are outweighing my decision to vote 'Yes'," he said and Randall agrees, "In addition to the fact that this is one more tax we don't need, the use of the funds is far too vague. 'Most groceries' will not be taxed and 'some prescriptions' will be? For the elderly and those living on fixed incomes in our county that is too vague an answer. Who wants to step up to the pick-up counter at CVS and then discover that your monthly meds are, in fact, on the taxed list? People need clarity and straight answers."

Long-time Orange County resident Scott Broaddus states "There comes a time when we have to say enough is enough. This is that time. I think it is ridiculous that this quarter-cent tax issue is before us once again."

Broaddus reiterates that this referendum has been voted down previously. "The people of Orange County have let it be known that they don't want this tax" he says and, "This is obviously an attempt to circumvent the will of the people by holding this vote on an off-year when so many who voted against it in the past won't be inclined to go to the polls."

Bill Knight, another life-long Orange County resident and former Orange County GOP Chair said "At the public hearing held in Hillsborough even the supporters suggested waiting until the 2012 elections. After the lies, distortions and half truths about the transfer tax, the re-evaluation of our property and now the tax increase, it's little wonder citizens have lost faith in a spend first, think second board."

"My worry" concludes Randall "is that when this tax initiative is defeated for the second time on November 8, how much more taxpayer money is the County leadership still willing to waste to pursue this rather than doing like the rest of us; setting a budget and living within it and, respecting the voice of the voter?"

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