

The Orange County Republican Party

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Press Release For Immediate Release

Orange County GOP Fires Up Anti-Transit Tax Effort For 2012

November 22, 2011 - Hillsborough, NC - Following a story in the November 9, 2011 edition of the Herald Sun, "*Durham Vote May Reignite Transit Debate in Orange County*," Orange County GOP Chairman Bob Randall is confident that Orange County voters will not tolerate such underhanded tactics being played again against voters. "In the Herald Sun article it was more than hinted at that getting the new Transit Tax referendum on the ballot in May 2012, rather than November 2012, speaks volumes about the County Commissioner's 'strategy of voter avoidance'."

Randall is referring to Carrboro Mayor Mark Chilton's urging of Orange County Commissioners to put the referendum on the May 2012 ballot, not the November 2012 ballot. Chilton, whose town abuts Chapel Hill, said he'd like the Orange commissioners to put a referendum on 2012's May primary ballot to "*avoid having the issue drowned out amid next year's presidential campaign*."

"Putting this May 2012 ballot in the primaries, versus the General Election ballot, seems to be the Democrats' new strategy," Randall stated. "It is clearly evident, that they choose to place these items on the ballot when they know voter turnout is likely to be low and they can control the vote. To imply they are 'doing the voters a favor' by this move is despicable, at best. Mr. Chilton's 'suggestion' is not only transparent but shameful."

Randall spearheaded the movement in Orange County to vote down the proposed Sales and Use Tax Referendum on the ballot this past November 8. That tax measure won in a 60/40% vote.

"The recent Sales Tax win by the Commissioners, in an off-year election, brought out an average of 17.6% of voters. In essence," Randall continued, "Chapel Hill and Carrboro voted this tax onto the shoulders of all County taxpayers. Our job is to make certain it doesn't happen again."

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"That 'victory'" Randall continued, "will be forever in Orange County's 'Hall of Shame' not a 'Hall of Fame'" referring to the tactics used to garner this win. "When you go into this knowing there is a good chance of excluding a significant percentage of likely voters - in the case of the sales tax issue, upwards of 80%+ exclusion, you should be ashamed, not proud of the win."

Randall notes that next week his Board's Executive Committee will convene and meet with other area groups who also opposed the tax to explore next steps. "Although I'm not at liberty to say definitively what our next steps are, the Commissioners can rest assured that we're not done with this tax or transit issue just yet. Do we support improving commerce in this county? Of course we do. Raising taxes again? Not at this time in an historic economic downturn."

Randall concluded by stating "Weeks ago we said 'win or lose' on this Tax Referendum, our County leaders can never again be allowed to add such a slant to an election. Add to that the silencing of opposing points of view and the exclusion of so many voters is almost criminal. It has to be stopped and it will. The tax issue defeat left us 'on empty' but," he concluded, "the Transit Tax issue put gas back in our tank."

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