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July 7, 2014

Board of Supervisors
County of Humboldt
525 5th Street
Eureka, CA 95501

SUBJECT: Placing a County-wide Revenue Measure on the Ballot November 4, 2014 Election

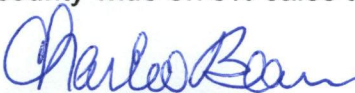
Supervisors,

In considering the options the Board of Supervisors (BOS) have in front of you, it is felt to meet immediate and short- and long-term financial needs of the County placing a general purpose sales tax measure on the ballot is the right path to take. This should be a County-wide sales tax measure in the amount of 0.75% (3/4-cent sales tax). The benefits from improved services the County will provide from the increased sales tax will go to all residents and visitors of our area.

Funding is an issue of concern for our County and being spread over 4,000 square miles of densely forested, mountainous, and rural land with many rural communities makes providing needed services even more difficult. Rural communities are asking for improved public safety services which include a stronger law enforcement to be present in the out-lying communities with more ability to investigate crimes committed and the impact of the illegal hard drug market is having on the community and its population.

It is felt that neither utility user tax being considered will address the needs of the county. Yes, it may discourage high use residents in parts of the county with illegal grows, but this may be only a short-term issue that is already changing with local, state and federal law changes to come in the future. The utility user tax will not address increase in the number of law enforcement officers needed to meet rural community needs and it comes with an additional investment which takes away immediate impact towards hard drugs identified as a concern.

The county will face many requests in the coming years to meet increased costs that surround personal to provide the services, increased costs to bring buildings up to date (ADA requirements) and general maintenance, the need to replace equipment needed by public safety do the increased work being requested by the community for them to do, and have the ability to develop a county reserve to meet unknown emergencies in the near and far future. Because of these costs, the BOS is encouraged to direct staff to return to your Board on July 15 for introduction of an ordinance placing a county-wide 0.75% sales tax measure on the ballot for November 4, 2014.


CHARLIE BEAN

