



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA MONICA
PRO & CON**

MEASURE A

SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT EMERGENCY FUNDING ACT

SPECIAL ALL MAIL-IN ELECTION – MAY 25, 2010

THE SITUATION:

California's on-going budget crisis has caused the school district to face unprecedented budget shortfalls. While the District cut \$4.5 million from the budget for 2009-10, a \$12-14 million deficit is projected for the 2010-11 school year, with deficits continuing for the next three years.

The budget problem is a result of reduced funding from the State which makes up 75% of the District's revenues. In the last two years, revenue coming from Sacramento has decreased by \$10 million. California is now predicting at least a \$21 billion deficit that may result in additional cuts to next year's school budget.

Voters approved a \$346 parcel tax in 2008 (Measure R) that has no expiration date.

THE PROPOSAL:

Voters will be asked to approve a \$198 parcel tax for five years. (A parcel is defined as a parcel of land, developed or undeveloped, within the District, which has been assigned an assessor's identification number.) This parcel tax offers exemptions to senior homeowners (age 65 and older who own and occupy their homes) and does not contain an annual cost-of-living adjustment so the amount would stay the same for all five years. Revenue from the parcel tax would be audited annually and be overseen by an Independent Oversight Committee.

Revenues raised by this measure can be used exclusively for the following purposes:

- Preserve programs and replace funds lost or reduced due to inadequate State funding
- Sustain achievement in reading, writing and mathematics for all students and to fulfill the core curriculum which includes music, arts, and athletics.
- Retain qualified teachers and staff, but not for administrative salaries.

The election will be conducted by mail; ballots must be received by the L.A. County Registrar's Office by May 25, 2010. A 2/3 vote is required to pass this measure.

FISCAL EFFECT:

It is estimated that the parcel tax will generate \$5.7 million per year for the next five years. All revenues must go to Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District schools. Even if the parcel tax passes, the District will still have to make budget cuts.

WHAT A YES OR NO VOTE MEANS:

A **YES** vote means that commencing July 2010, a flat tax of \$198 per parcel will be levied on Santa Monica and Malibu property owners for each of the next five years.

A **NO** vote means that this temporary parcel tax will not be levied on Santa Monica and Malibu property owners.

SUPPORTERS SAY:

This is a temporary tax to help alleviate an emergency that has arisen due to the dramatic decrease in state funding that endangers the District's excellent programs and could lead to the layoff of 113 teachers, staff, and administrators, an increase in class sizes, and a shorter school year.

A local parcel tax is the only new revenue source available that can immediately provide the amount of revenue needed to prevent serious harm to our local schools.

The District has one of the highest credit ratings in the State, a rating given only to districts showing fiscal responsibility and excellent financial management.

OPPONENTS SAY:

We are already supporting the schools with a parcel tax and facilities bonds. We need to send a clear message to the board of education that they cannot keep coming to the taxpayers.

Parcel taxes are especially regressive and unfair because the cost is the same for all parcels regardless of size.

The District should tighten its belt and live within its means – just like the rest of us. With a history of mismanagement, why should we keep giving the District money?

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Supporters: Yes on A

www.SaveSantaMonicaMalibuSchools.org

Opponents: No on A

<http://www.NoSneakAttax.com>