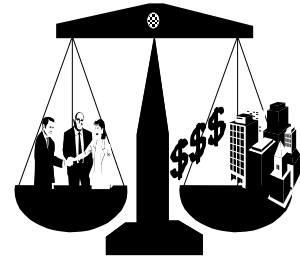


Citizens for Common Sense

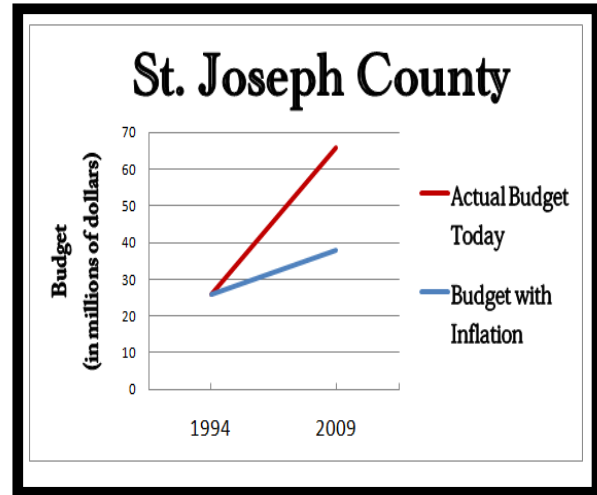
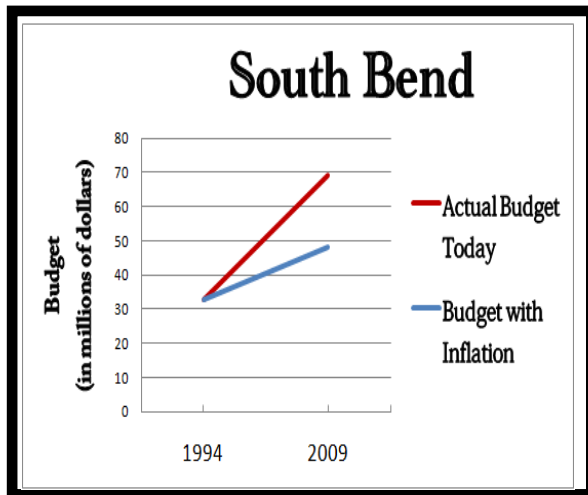


July 2009

Seeking government that is responsible and responsive to taxpayers in St. Joseph County, IN

Option Tax Fight is On!

On July 13 & 14, South Bend and St. Joe County want to more than double your county income taxes. Don't let them! County income taxes would go from less than 1% (.8%) to nearly 2% (1.75%). What do YOU make in a year? Do you want to give \$2 of every \$100 you make to City and County governments? What did they do with the FIRST option tax? See the charts below: THEY DOUBLED IN SIZE!



THEY NEED TO CUT BACK, NOT TAX!

Where did the money go? As of 2004, a full 2/3 of the County's new tax money had gone into personnel! That's right – growing the size of government while the population they were serving had NOT grown.

Yet South Bend feels they are OWED these taxes. While they pour thousands into a Hall of Fame losing \$1 million/year, pay four different groups for “development” ideas, and have a legal staff many times the size of Evansville's or Fort Wayne's.

Meanwhile, the County has dozens of non-police take-home cars, a Juvenile Justice Center so huge it is trying to rent out excess space, a Sheriff making over \$150,000 because he keeps tax warrant fees,

and a big new Domestic Violence program whose rape convictions may actually be worse than before.

The City should look at releasing some TIF funds. They have THOUSANDS of acres in TIFs. The rest of us pay their police, fire, and general government, while they stockpile taxes for streets & landscaping! They should release TIF money before taxing us!

And what about the County's and City's excessive fund balances? They invest the lump-sum tax distributions they get twice a year and do what with the dividends? South Bend has piled up \$47 million, the County, a similar amount. Why don't these monies go back into the budget and lower taxes?

There are a half dozen things YOU can do to STOP THE OPTION TAXES!

You'll find them on the flier on the back. How many of them can YOU do in the next week & a half?

Pass out fliers, contact the councilmen, and get to the hearings! (wear the red t-shirts!!!)

St. Joe County/South Bend

DOUBLE OUR OPTION TAX

With just two week's notice, the City of South Bend and the St. Joe County Council have decided to double your county income taxes – if you let them! Our county income taxes would go from less than 1% to nearly 2% of your income!

This is the worse possible time to hit us with a tax. We are having to cut back; they need to, too. Government does not have to grow. Yet that's what they've been doing ever since the last option tax! (see chart on our website)

When the first option tax was imposed, the County's general fund budget was \$26 million. With 15 years inflation, that should now be \$38 million. But it's not! It's now \$66 million! Same with South Bend. Their '94 budget was \$33 million. With inflation, it should be \$48 million now. Instead, it's \$69 million. And 2/3 of the new money was spent on PAYROLL – growing the size of government while the population they serve has not grown. THEY NEED TO CUT BACK, NOT TAX!

Fight the Option Taxes!

- e-mail the South Bend Council: mbwisnie@southbendin.gov
- e-mail the County Council: cocouncil@co.st-joseph.in.us
- copy and distribute this flier far and wide so more people know
(this flier is available on our website as a pdf file)
- get a free "No New Taxes" sign from Frick's Dairy Queen (3907 S. Mich)
- get on our website at [**www.citizensforcommonsense.info**](http://www.citizensforcommonsense.info)
for last-minute updates and more ways to contact local officials
- attend the hearings and speak up! The votes will be held:

Mon, July 13 at 7pm (South Bend)
& Tues, July 14 at 7pm (County)
at the County-City Building (corner of Jefferson & Lafayette) – 4th floor

And yes, attend BOTH -- either one can stop it!