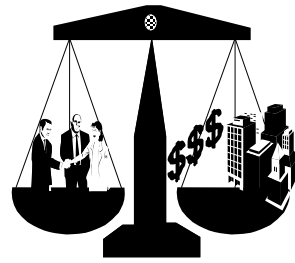


Citizens for Common Sense



June 2009

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

Pre-empt Option Tax!

St. Joe County and South Bend officials are considering yet another county income tax. Called LOIT (Local Option Income Tax) it is actually a pair of taxes, to be enacted before Aug. 1, for up to 1.25% more of your income!

Incredibly, their focus is always on "How can we make up the lost revenue?" rather than "Where can we make cuts?" Do they think we don't remember that they doubled their budgets in the 10 years after they got the last option tax?

Two-thirds of the increase was PAYROLL. Yes, new government employees. Why did we need to expand the size of our local governments? The populace they are serving did not increase. These taxes are not justified!

They have not addressed take-home cars (dozens of non-police vehicles) which we buy, insure, maintain, and PAY GAS FOR. And why don't they trim the staffs in offices that have inflated dramatically over the last 10 years?

On top of this, what about the millions of tax dollars diverted from the general budgets by TIF districts, or the millions of dollars sitting in liquid assets not reported in the general budgets? (Watch for details to be posted on our website.)

If you don't think it's right that we get hit with another option income tax, take time today to contact your city and county elected officials (contact info inside) and get ready to rally in July! (Red t-shirts available.)

How to Get Involved:

***CITIZENS FOR COMMON SENSE* OPTION TAX MEETING**

Now is the time for all concerned taxpayers to join together to make things happen. We need to crank through ideas on how to get our local officials working on leaner budgets instead of new taxes. Phone call blitz, billboards, rally, radio spots, more? Bring ideas! We won't leave without an action plan.

Tues, June 23, 6:30pm

Mishawaka Public Library
209 Lincoln Way East (east of Main)

Refreshments. Very brief business meeting followed by lots and lots of discussion and brainstorming!
Contact Kelly Havens if questions.

Another Tea Party!

*** South Bend ***

After the phenomenal response to the Tea Parties in South Bend and Mishawaka on tax day, there is an even bigger event scheduled in South Bend for July 1. Speakers, including representatives of Common Sense, will be addressing key legislative issues, taxes, budgets, rights, and current trends. Bring signs! Raise your voice! Be part of a national phenomenon! We CAN make a difference!

Wed, July 1, 11-2pm

Court House steps, Main Street, S.B.

Contact organizer Cindy Bachota at 309-1126 (cell)
or e-mail southbendteaparty@yahoo.com.

Tax Abatement Ordinance Passes...

How blatant can the County Democratic Chairman be?

With the public liking some elements of the Tax Abatement ordinance but being more concerned that its cumbersome provisions, including union-scale wages, would be a death blow to St. Joe County's future (the Chamber spoke against it, a state redevelopment official spoke against it, as did Citizens for Common Sense), County Democratic Chairman Butch Morgan seemed irrationally determined to see the measure proceed.

At the hearing, Common Sense pointed out that at least two County Councilman voting had received 90% of their outside campaign funds (non-family, non-party) over two years from the very construction unions favored by the ordinance. The vote proceeded anyway, with the five Democrats present voting in favor and all three Republicans voting against.

A week later, the County Commissioners vetoed the bill, with one of the two Democrats joining the Republican. Said Commissioner Bob Kovach (D), "We should not put our community at a disadvantage." So the ordinance returned to the Council who needed six votes to override the veto. Attention focused on the Democrat who had been absent from the original vote: Kevin Kubsch.

Kubsch was cited in the Tribune as saying he was open to listening and expected tons of phone calls. Unfortunately, Kubsch did not live at his listed address and the phone number he gave was the Council secretary's. The fact that he did not live in his district had been raised by his opponent when he first ran, but the County Democratic Party had never seemed to care.

When Kubsch began leaning *against* the ordinance (confirmed by State Rep. Jackie Walorski who had provided him compelling info about Elkhart vs. St. Joe), *suddenly* Kubsch's residency became an issue and he resigned. *Who resigns right before a key vote!?*

Kubsch's potential successors, who both *supported* the ordinance, were then selected with little notice (according to a resident who had intended to run). There are laws about notification. Did Morgan follow them?

At their subsequent meeting, the newly constituted County Council voted 6-3 to overturn the veto, and the Tax Abatement Ordinance went into effect. This leaves us wondering: Just why was this ordinance so critical to the County Democratic Party? Why did Kubsch really resign? And did union-scale wages mean so much to *somebody* that laws may have been broken for them?

... and St. Joe County Loses

It's happening already. Within weeks of the passage of the St. Joe County Tax Abatement Ordinance, we all learned that a company called Electric Motors Corp. would be bringing hundreds, maybe even thousands, of jobs into our area. *But into Elkhart County, not St. Joe.*

As we read further in the Tribune story, we learned that the CEO, Wil Cashen, was a graduate of Penn High. That means he lived here! He could still have family and friends here. So why would he not relocate HERE!?

Can you say Tax Abatement Ordinance?

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Thank you to everyone who responded to our e-mail about the request from the National Taxpayers Union. As a result of your clear feedback, Common Sense was among a short list of large taxpayer organizations in Indiana to sign a letter to Congressman Donnelly regarding "Cap and Trade."

Don't Be Left Out!

Did you get the Cap and Trade e-mail? And when the Tax Abatement Ordinance took its turns this spring, did you get our urgent updates for which there was no time for a full-blown newsletter mailing? If you didn't, then we do not have your e-mail address.

PLEASE, get your e-mail address to us officially!

We pledge to keep your e-mail address confidential. We will never share the list. Our e-mails are sent "blank carbon copy" so no one sees your address and you don't see anyone else's. Finally, we send only urgent updates, maybe two or three in a really busy month, and you can remove your name at any time.

E-mail us today at CitizensforCommonSense@gmail.com to get on the list.