

Dear Council Members,

Please do not put any competing sales tax measures on the March 2024 ballot. There are several significant reasons why this is a terrible idea.

- 1) It will alienate our own fire department and ALL other fire departments in Sonoma County as they have explicitly asked that Council not place a competing measure on the March ballot;
- 2) The Countywide tax is better because we get money from all of Sonoma County, not just our little retail area, which is struggling. Under the Countywide tax if someone buys something in Cotati or Healdsburg, Sebastopol get money;
- 3) The \$77,000 that it will cost to put the measure on the ballot could be used to support local businesses by supporting events, clean up, decorations, window decorations. It would be much better to support our local businesses to increase sales and foot traffic than to put a measure on the ballot that alienates us from all the fire service agencies in the County;
- 4) Our budget is actually unknown as it has been demonstrated over and over again that the numbers do not add up and there are significant discrepancies.

Please do not alienate Sebastopol from the entirety of Sonoma County's fire agencies at a time when our own fire service is in flux. At this point of time, we need to be good partners to the fire service community as we might be working with them through service agreements, consolidation considerations, and mutual aid.

Thank you,
Kate Haug