

From: "Craig Sullivan" <craigs@countysupervisors.org>
Subject: **FW: County Sales Tax Proposal**
Date: July 25, 2008 6:19:52 AM MST
To: <lynne@prescottnews.com>

Hi Lynne,

Thank you for your efforts to contact me.

Simply put, I was wrong in how I characterized Yavapai County's position in my email to Senator O'halleran. It is the case that CSA sought legislative authorization for an additional county option sales tax though the issue never received a vote. Representatives from Coconino and Navajo counties were active in educating legislators as to the importance of permitting additional local discretion regarding revenue collection. However, the Yavapai County Board did not take a position on the issue and no Yavapai supervisor advocated for this authority. My mischaracterization stemmed from a loose recollection of a conversation with county staff, and I regret that I failed to verify this before I sent the email.

After I sent the email to Sen. O'halleran, I contacted Julie Ayers, manager at Yavapai County. She was clear with me that the Board and its members had not taken a position on the issue. Unfortunately, I did not follow up with the Senator to correct myself.

Counties are capped in their ability to pay for what state statute requires and local constituents expect. Rising costs associated with jails, courts, road building and the state mandated long term care system are placing enormous pressure on county budgets. The sales tax proposal was brought to the CSA by a coalition of small counties (Apache, Graham, Greenlee, Gila, Navajo, Santa Cruz and La Paz). It was among other proposals intended to provide local flexibility to address rising costs and meet constituent demands. The current county controlled sales tax authority is capped by state law at ½ cent. The proposal would have raised the permissible amount to 1 cent. Any increment of the increase would require unanimous vote of the Board of Supervisors or a majority of the Board could refer the matter to the voters.

The proposal passed the CSA Board via a voice vote and was included in our 2008 legislative package. It is very important to note that a proposal being endorsed by our organization does not necessarily mean that a county or a specific supervisor directly supports the proposal. Rather, it means that our membership has authorized the CSA to work on the issue with the legislature.

We worked with some legislators to have the issue introduced, but it did not receive a vote in the legislature. Coconino and Navajo counties assisted in educating legislators about the importance of having local flexibility. Each of these counties is engaged in strategic planning processes designed to meet local needs. They supported the additional authority as a possible mechanism to serve their constituents. However, even in these cases, no decisions had been made about using it. Other counties didn't see an immediate application for the authority, but they supported the general idea of having tools available when and if local conditions demand it.

Thank you again for contacting me on this issue. If you need any additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Craig Sullivan
Executive Director
County Supervisors Association
602 452 4500

From: Lynne LaMaster [mailto:lynne@prescottnews.com]
Sent: Sunday, July 20, 2008 8:15 AM
To: Craig Sullivan
Subject: County Sales Tax Proposal

Hi, Craig,

My name is Lynne LaMaster, and I write for [Prescott eNews](#), which is an online news website in the Prescott area.

Georgene Lockwood has given me a copy of an email you reportedly sent to Senator O'Halleran on Monday, July 7, regarding the County Sales Tax Proposal. In that email you state, "The proposal was endorsed by all 15 counties. Coconino, Yavapai and Navajo were the most interested in the proposal. Others, though they had no immediate plans, were interested in the expanded authority as a tool for possible use in the future."

I was wondering if you could clarify that for me a bit, please?

What do you mean exactly by "Coconino, Yavapai and Navajo were the most interested in the proposal?" How did they show interest? Was it their proposal to begin with? Did they push it, endorse it, or what? Was there some specific comment that was made that indicated interest?

Did any representative from Yavapai County work on the proposal? If so, who?

Did any representative from Yavapai County indicate that they were going to raise the local sales tax immediately if the proposal were approved by legislature? If so, who?

Thanks so much for your help in this issue. I've already spoken with a couple of people such as Carol Springer and Lucy Mason, and they all say that you're the man and have all the answers! I really appreciate any and all the information you can provide, so we can make sure that we're staying extremely accurate!

Thanks again,

Lynne

Lynne LaMaster
lynne@prescottnews.com

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