

**COMMITTEE FOR BALLOT ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE PROPOSED  
CITY OF CALABASAS SALES TAX INCREASE  
(CALABASAS MEASURE K)**

- City Council not controlling expenses
  - Expenses are rising but so are existing revenues.
  - A 1% tax hike may not sound like much but the current sales tax in Calabasas is already nearly 10%. A 1% hike in sales tax means it will be increasing over 10% of the current tax rate, making the new sales tax nearly 11%.
  - The responsible approach is to “cut your coat to fit your cloth”— live within existing means before raising taxes.
  
- There are no restrictions on the use of revenues from the proposed hike in sales tax for its duration.
  - The proposed tax hike is not legally restricted to specific purposes
  - Although promoted for public safety and wildfire prevention, it's technically a general tax with no legal requirement to fund those areas. The tax revenue could be used for any city purpose, on anything: Pensions. Lawsuit settlements. Pay raises. Anything.
  - In addition, there is a lack of oversight specificity and accountability, No detailed commitment about who will serve on the tax oversight committee or how it will function. The details are important for any accountability to be transparent.
  
- In Calabasas we already pay more taxes than neighboring cities
  - The City Council cherry-picked high tax cities (e.g. Pasadena, Culver City) for comparison rather than using neighboring cities (Thousand Oaks at 7.25%, Moorpark at 7.2%, Westlake Village at 9.5%, Agoura 9.75%).
  - Also, Calabasas already has a local utility tax unlike our neighbors. Agoura Hills and Westlake Village have no such tax, Calabasas already taxes natural gas, electricity, telephone services, including intrastate, interstate, international, and wireless (cell) phones at a rate of 5% and it all stays in Calabasas.
  - The City Council asserts that Calabasas retains a smaller share of their property taxes. Calabasas property tax is “just low share”, but it is NOT “low revenue”. Strong property values produce good revenue. Don’t worry about the percentage of property tax that Calabasas retains, what counts is the higher property tax revenue that the City receives from its high property values.
  - Calabasas’s property tax, sales tax and utility tax revenues are each greater than each of these tax revenues from neighboring Agoura Hills.

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- The proposed 1% sales tax hike will hurt local businesses.
  - With this proposed tax increase, the total sales tax rate of 10.75% will place Calabasas near the top in the state.
  - City Council asserts 57.2% of its current sales tax revenue comes from nonresidents. This is only an estimate but there is no supporting documentation shown. Regardless, the remaining 42.8% already paid by Calabasas residents amounts to \$2,270,000 in sales taxes each year.
  - Most of those non-resident shoppers in Calabasas are likely our neighbors from Agoura Hills and Westlake Village. Higher sales tax rates would lead some resident and nonresident shoppers in Calabasas to shop outside the City. The City could lose revenue and businesses could leave.
  - The sales tax depends on your residence rather than the location of the dealer. The proposed 1% hike in sales tax will increase the tax on the average new car by about \$500. It makes no difference if you are buying in Calabasas, Thousand Oaks or wherever, if you live in Calabasas, you will pay the proposed Calabasas sales tax increase.
  
- This is not the right time for local tax increases
  - Rising cost of living and multiple proposed tax increases (county and city) create undue hardship on residents already struggling financially.
  - The proposed 1% sales tax hike disproportionately affects low-income residents and seniors by taking a larger percentage of income from lower income families. No provisions exist to exempt or exclude seniors or low-income households from the tax burden.