

EDITORIALS & OPINION

Marietta Daily Journal

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ■ YOUR OPINION

Cobb Taxpayers Association not in favor of new SPLOST

DEAR EDITOR:

In the lead up to the vote on the next County Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) the Cobb Taxpayers Association (CTA) has been asked by a number of people, including the MDJ, if we plan to run a formal campaign this time around against its passage. The short answer is no. We simply don't have the resources to compete with the deep pockets that are running the campaign to promote its passage.

However, that does not change the fact that we oppose its passage and encourage voters to vote NO. Like all previous SPLOSTs it is laden with pork barrel projects designed to reward special interests and that represent a significant portion of the money to be spent. Moreover, there is a glaring lack of transparency, with many projects being open-ended with respect to the amounts allocated.

One item that is most glaring, and has received little or no attention by the media, is the whole issue of Tier 1 and Tier 2 projects. CTA opposes the existence of Tier 2, which like so many SPLOST projects, have the potential to become slush funds. If a project is really needed and necessary it should be on the Tier 1

list, case closed. So if the projected revenue from a six year SPLOST is \$1.15 billion, then all the projects you want to have done should fall into that revenue projection. If collections start to exceed what is projected, (like with the current SPLOST) then collections should stop at that point in time, thereby giving taxpayers some much needed relief. Tier 2 projects, however, are put in there in the hopes that if revenue exceeds projections than whoopee! we have more money to play with for frivolous projects that did not meet the Tier 1 level of necessity. In addition, if the SPLOST passes, voters would be voting for a \$1.15 billion allocation, not a six year, one percent tax, regardless of how much money is collected within that time frame.

For that reason, and many others, we encourage your readers to vote NO. A strong NO vote, in the face of no formal campaign against the SPLOST, will send a strong message to our Board of Commissioners, which says "clean up your act" and that we are mad as hell and are not going to take it anymore.

Lance Lamberton

Chairman

Cobb Taxpayers Association