



The League of Women Voters
Berkeley • Albany • Emeryville

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PROS AND CONS

LOCAL BALLOT MEASURES

SPECIAL STATEWIDE ELECTION NOVEMBER 8, 2005

ALBANY Parcel tax 2/3 vote required
Measure A for Albany schools

The Question:

Shall the Albany Unified School District be authorized to levy a special parcel tax to support the public schools?

The way it is now:

AUSD ended the last fiscal year with a \$350,000 deficit. The projected deficit at the end the 2005-2006 fiscal year is \$250,000. This is because, for the last 2 years, the State has not paid local districts all of the funds they are entitled to receive under Proposition 98.

What Measure A would do:

Measure A would levy an additional special parcel tax, at the rate of \$250 for each residential unit and \$.05 per square foot for each non-residential unit, or \$250, whichever is greater. The tax would annually increase no more than the inflation rate. There would be an exemption for low-income and senior property owners available by filing a petition.

The funds raised will be used to:

- Attract and retain highly qualified staff with competitive compensation and benefits
- Maintain and improve student support services by restoring 1 full-time librarian at each school, enhancing counseling services in the middle and high schools, and supporting English language learners
- Maintain campus supervision for safety
- Maintain class-size reduction programs, if State funding support continues
- Maintain class sizes smaller than the State average in grades 4-12
- Enhance support for extra-curricular activities

Fiscal effect:

It is estimated that this tax would generate about \$285,000 annually. It would sunset in 7 years.

Supporters say:

- Preserving and enhancing the quality and reputation of Albany schools will help increase residential and commercial property values and will attract community-oriented families who make Albany special.
- The School Board, in conjunction with the District's excellent management team, has worked hard to cut costs and budget carefully.
- Even with generous voluntary contributions from residents, total funding per student in Albany remains below the county average and well below that of Berkeley and Piedmont.
- Federal and State mandates require school districts to spend more without providing new revenues.

Opponents say:

- The tax rate would increase annually over the next 7 years. The sunset provision is always promised but never delivered.
- The exemption for low-income families and seniors would require an annual petition.
- The community already generously donates \$600,000 a year.
- The district has enough money to operate efficiently and shouldn't be asking us for more.