

# Vote **No** On Prop. 1

If approved, the combined state and local sales tax in Salt Lake County will increase from 6.85% to 7.1% - a change that will increase taxes, on average, by \$50 per person or \$200 for an average family of four. This could mean the difference between a week or more worth of groceries for most families.

Utah families have had enough new taxes this year as it is. The local option sales tax would be the third tax increase Utah residents have faced this year. In March, the legislature voted to approve a 5-cent-per-gallon increase in the gas tax, which now means that Utah drivers will pay over 48-cents-per-gallon just in taxes every time they fill up the tank. The state legislature also raised homeowner's property taxes in the valley an average of \$50 per home.

Considered separately, these tax increases may not sound like much, but for lower-income and middle-class families, every dollar counts and higher local sales taxes would only make their financial struggles worse.

Supporters say that the proposed tax increase is, in part, for road and infrastructure improvement. But 40% of the tax increase - almost \$20 million dollars worth -- will actually be diverted to help fund the Utah Transit Authority. The Utah Transit Authority already receives \$139.2 million in Salt Lake County alone.

UTA executives receive six figure salaries and tens of thousands of dollars in bonuses and perks. The agency's CEO travelled out of state on agency-funded trips 42 times in 28 months, travelling internationally nearly as often as the President of the United States.

Its about stewardship. If the UTA can afford to pay such high salaries and award such benefits, then they probably can also afford to better shepherd the resources taxpayers have given them.

The Utah Transit Authority doesn't need another \$20 million in extra revenue. Instead, the agency should be looking toward reducing executive pay, cutting down on travel costs, and reducing inefficiencies wherever they find them.

Finally, this sales tax will fall hardest on those who have little or nothing left at the end of the month. According to the Utah Taxpayers Association, the average Utahn already pays \$720 in sales taxes every year, and \$3,304 in combined state and local taxes. The local option tax would add a few cents to most purchases, which quickly adds up.

If the sales tax increase is passed, Utahns would pay a quarter of a cent more for all purchases. In Salt Lake County, this increased sales tax would scrape \$50 million out of our checkbooks, according to the state's own analysis.

Government doesn't need more money—it needs to better prioritize where it spends the taxes we already pay. Please vote NO on Proposition 1.

***Evelyn Everton***

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Sandy Resident*