



HAMILTON COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY

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July 2, 2018

Dear Precinct Executives and Members of the Executive Committee,

If you have been following local news, you likely are aware that our Democratic County Commissioners had to take a tough vote to protect basic services and public safety. Primarily because of cuts to basic services by Republicans at the state level, Commissioners Todd Portune and Denise Driehaus voted to temporarily raise the sales tax in Hamilton County for 18 months, after which time, taxes will decrease. Now, there is an effort to repeal this short, small, and fair solution.

Since you are the eyes and ears of the HCDP, and you are our ambassadors to your community, we are writing this letter so that you are armed with the facts.

The first thing you need to know is that Republicans created Hamilton County's budget deficit and now they oppose the solution. Governor John Kasich has been paying for his tax cuts for the rich by slashing the budgets of local governments. Since 2011, the Governor has taken your tax dollars away from basic services like 911 and sheriff patrols. Just last year, the Republicans in the State Legislature managed to find \$15 million in new cuts to Hamilton County. In response, when the Republicans controlled the Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners, they passed structurally unbalanced budgets, relying on one-time revenues and other tricks to balance the budget, all to protect Kasich from the real consequences of his cuts.

Since 2011, there have been 47 attempts by local municipalities to raise taxes to make up for John Kasich's cuts to local government. Republican-controlled jurisdictions like Anderson Township and Warren County have raised property and sales taxes to make up for the Republican War on Local Government. The Republicans have shifted the tax burden from the state and federal level to the local level, and that has put basic services and public safety in jeopardy.

6109 Webbland Place • Cincinnati, Ohio 45213 • Phone: (513) 421-0495 • Fax (513) 421-0757
www.hamiltoncountydems.org • E-Mail: caleb@hamiltoncountydems.org



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Our Democratic County Commissioners came up with a solution to protect public safety and fix the Republican deficit once and for all. Their solution is **short, small, and fair.**

The solution is **short** because Hamilton County's sales tax will increase by one fifth of a penny for 18 months, and then it will go down to 6.95% in April of 2020.

The solution is **small** because it is the minimum needed just to balance the budget. Fifty four of Ohio's 88 counties have a higher sales tax rate, even after the increase. In 2020, when taxes go down, 67 counties will have a higher tax rate. Hamilton County's sales tax rate is still far below comparable urban counties like Cuyahoga (8%) and Franklin (7.5%).

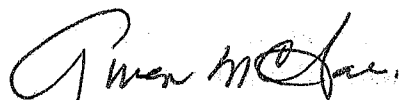
The solution is **fair** because it will prevent layoffs of 200 Hamilton County employee, such as 911 call takers, Sherriff's deputies, and crime lab technicians. It will allow the progress made in reversing the heroin epidemic and reducing infant mortality deaths to continue. Imagine having to call 911 in an emergency and being asked to "please hold." That is the kind of government Republicans want. We can do better.

The solution is also fair because 40% of the sales tax is paid by people who live outside Hamilton County, all of whom benefit from Hamilton County's strong leadership as the economic engine for our region.


We hope this letter is helpful to you. We urge you not to sign any petitions on this issue and to tell others to do the same. You can also help by writing letters to the editor, engaging on social media, and relaying this information to the people in your neighborhood. If you have specific questions, feel free to email or call.

Thanks for the work that you do.

Sincerely,



Gwen McFarlin
County Co-Chair



Connie

Connie Pillich
County Co-Chair