

REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE HB

Toyota, Tesla, SpaceX and now Chevron are fleeing the state because it's too expensive to do business in California. It's no different in Hermosa Beach where stores like Becker's, Hermosa Beach Beauty and others have left town because rents are skyrocketing, foot traffic is down, and profit margins aren't enough to sustain viable businesses.

A 3/4 percent sales tax increase will drive even more businesses from our downtown. The City Council says it supports local businesses, but a 10.25% sales tax only hurts businesses.

The City Council claims the \$3 million generated from the tax increase is critical to maintaining city services like police, fire, and paramedics. Yet City Manager Lowenthal recently said the police department was fully staffed and had received \$1 million in federal funding for a "Real Time Crime Center" and \$900,000 for a mobile mental health unit for the homeless.

The City Council also claims this tax is needed to pave our streets. Don't forget that taxpayers previously approved other tax measures that return to our city, including the State Gas Tax, and county Measures R and M. That money was designated for street paving.

A sales tax increase should not be used to fund essential city services when we have a healthy General Fund. The city needs to carefully evaluate THEIR spending before asking US for more money. There is no guarantee that the \$3 million won't go to higher salaries and bonuses.

Enough is enough. Vote No on HB.

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