

## Letter to the Editor

**Dear Navigator:**

As the City County Councillor for District 13 I voted against the Mayor's tax increase at the Council meeting on July 23, 2007 because I was concerned about what a tax increase would do to each of the following:

- 1) working families who will have more of their paychecks withheld to pay the Mayor's higher income tax at the same time their monthly mortgages are being increasing by \$100 or more a month to cover higher property taxes.
- 2) tenants who will have to pay higher rent of \$100.00 a month or more to pay the increased property tax plus the Mayor's higher income tax.
- 3) Retired folks on fixed incomes will have also face the Mayor's higher taxes.

From the communication I received from voters I believed a vote against the Mayor's tax increase was required.

Councillor Borst wanted to offer an amendment which would have provided property tax relief for families and funded 100 additional police officers. Council President Monroe Gray cut off debate and did not even allow the Council to consider Councillor Borst's amendments.

I could not vote to increase the tax burden on the citizens of my district whose property tax bills had increased an average of 34% unless immediate and substantial property tax relief was included along with meaningful reductions in expenditures. Particularly knowing that commercial property tax bills did not increase significantly. The Mayor's tax increase provided no property tax relief nor did it provide for reductions in expenditures. For the mayor to be satisfied that his proposal freezes the property tax at 2007 levels is no help, it's the 2007 tax bills that are far too high! Tax bills need to be rolled back! Finally, there was nothing in the Mayor's tax increase guaranteeing that the \$450 million dollars the Mayor wanted to borrow for public safety pensions would actually be used to properly fund those pensions.

I just joined the Council on May 12, 2007 and I am trying to do the best job I can. I've tried to learn as much as I could about the Mayor's tax increase. I listened to the arguments on both sides. As a city we do need to properly fund the public safety pensions. The retired public safety officers drawing that pension risked their lives and they deserve to have their pensions properly funded.

Share your thoughts on the issues facing our city with me and also with the Mayor, your state representative and senator. I want to hear from the citizens of District 13, it makes me a better councillor. I do not care about your party affiliation I represent, and am here to serve, all of the citizens of District 13. Take the time to learn about the candidates up for election this November. Find out what each stands for and then decide which most represents your beliefs and vote for that person.

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