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Taxpayer Protection: Supervisor Donald P. Wagner Directs for a Higher Threshold on Passing Taxes

Santa Ana, California – At the Board of Supervisors meeting on November 19, the Board passed Supervisor Donald P. Wagner’s motion for a Charter Amendment, requiring a supermajority vote at the Board of Supervisors on special tax proposals. As an ardent guardian of taxpayer dollars, Supervisor Wagner wants to ensure any tax increase proposal has widespread community support as reflected by a willingness of elected officials to stand behind that proposal. Supervisor Wagner’s Charter Amendment will go before the voters to decide on the March 3, 2020 presidential primary election ballot.

“When I was the Mayor of Irvine, I added this taxpayer protection to Irvine’s municipal code, and found it was a popular safeguard our residents wanted. By bringing a two-thirds supermajority to the County level, we can ensure widespread public support behind any governmental tax efforts that impact our hardworking citizens’ pocketbooks,” said Supervisor Don Wagner.

Under Article XIII of the current California State Constitution, two-thirds voter approval is required for general obligation bonds, certain school bonds, parcel taxes, and non-value-based taxes on real property. Supervisor Wagner’s Charter Amendment expands those taxpayer protections.

Supervisor Wagner continued, “We are overtaxed. As an elected official, I want to guarantee it’s not special interests or a simple majority driving a tax vote but a true demand of the people. If a special tax is to be imposed on taxpayers, there needs to be a strong consensus on record by the elected representatives serving their constituents.”

There was an exemption for Community Facility Districts (CFDs), as they are localized to specific properties.

A supermajority on the ballot ensures a proposed tax has expansive support, and that elected officials agree such special taxes are indeed necessary. The Charter Amendment will make it more challenging to raise special taxes at the public’s expense; tax proposals must be bolstered by the community. Many cities offer this Constitutional protection; now Orange County ranks as a leader in defending our already over-taxed taxpayers.

For more information, please call Supervisor Wagner’s office at (714) 834-3330 or email Donald.Wagner@ocgov.com

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For media inquires or interview opportunities, please contact Communications Director Rachel Lurya.