

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Supporting levy is a citizen duty

Paying taxes to support public safety services is a civic responsibility. It is my way of contributing to a civil society.

The self-proclaimed "no property tax increase" cadre ignores the revenue neutral side of the public safety levy. County taxes are replacing decades of federal tax-based subsidies. These anti-levy voices ask me to reject the public safety operating levy but provide no replacement solution for the lost \$2,400,000 federal subsidy.

I will vote "yes" because "no" means more years of diminished public safety services needed in urban Polk County — no narcotics team, decreasing crime prosecution and an understaffed jail.

*E.M. Easterly  
West Salem*

## Some can't afford more property tax

It makes no difference whether the public safety tax levy is needed or not, many Polk County residents have no excess money to pay this new tax. It is simple. Vote "no."

*Reginald Wiensz  
Dallas*

## Don't compare county salaries

Do not let the pay of officials in larger counties dictate what our officials should be paid.

Polk County is the poorest and one of the smallest counties in the state. The money would be better spent for the Polk County Sheriff's Department.

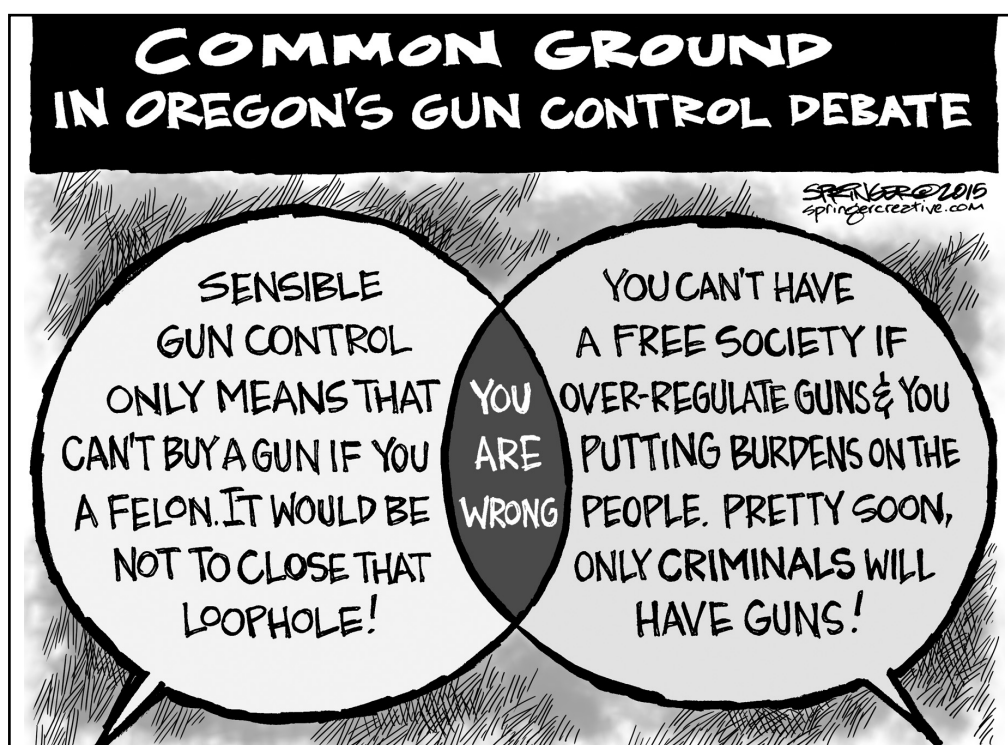
*Sandra James  
Dallas*

## Elected officials can't be trusted

We need more deputies on patrol and more staff in the DA's office. Why isn't the jail staffed with lower paid corrections officers? Why not use contract labor for the DA's office?

Do you, as taxpayers, trust our elected officials to not spend money from the special levy for other projects since it will be placed in the general fund? I don't!

In five years, the county will want another special levy. Our elected officials should think outside the box to find less expensive ways to provide the services needed. Now they want pay raises?



Vote no on measure 27-117.

*Lloyd Collins  
Dallas*

## Levy needed to keep county safe

When a police officer arrests someone in Dallas, Independence, Monmouth or West Salem, that person is booked into the county jail, investigated and charged by the county district attorney and prosecuted in the county circuit court.

If convicted, the individual is jailed in the county jail, when paroled, supervised by the county corrections personnel.

All Polk County residents receive these safety services whether city residents or rural residents.

Supporting the county Public Safety Levy ensures viability of all our safety and security services for our city and county residents alike. Vote yes for public safety.

*James Williams  
Dallas*

## Property should not be taxed at all

Our home is our security. No taxes should be levied on property.

I liked the idea of a rapid response, on-call deputy for rural areas and limiting sheriff patrols to rural areas, letting city police handle issues of any kind in the city limits.

Higher taxes on rental property could cause a rent increase.

*Annette Blair  
Rickreall*

## Vote no, send a strong message

Seriously? The Polk County Commissioners did not get the message the first

time?

We do not want another tax. We are tired of constant requests for new bonds, fees and taxes. We already pay too much.

The Polk County public safety tax is just another layer on top of other layers of taxes. At some point the weight of all these taxes is going to cause a public outcry.

We have an opportunity to defeat a tax increase with our votes. Please vote against this tax levy and send a strong message.

*Faye Frei  
Dallas*

## Voting yes is the right thing to do

In Dallas we enjoy a remarkable community, widely known for its peace, tranquility, sense of comfort and safety.

In this regard, we greatly benefit from the many aspects of the public safety system operated by Polk County. In mid-February, the Dallas City Council, after thorough briefings, voted in vigorous support of the Polk County Public Safety Levy, Measure 27-117. We believe this measure is the only practical means to maintain these vital services that are so important to us all. Join us in voting "yes" for the levy. It is good public policy and the right thing to do.

*Brian Dalton  
Mayor, city of Dallas*

## Levy needed to fix safety system

The Polk County public safety system is broken and you have the opportunity to change that. The current "funding fix" by the federal government will be used to offset the cost of the public safety levy to our taxpayers — you have my word on that. However, this funding will last only two years and, if more tax revenue is not generated, we will not be able to provide basic services at an acceptable rate. I urge you to vote "yes" on the upcoming levy. It is a

## County taxes out of control, vote no

It is time for voters to put their foot down. Taxes have grown out of control in Polk County. We do not want another increase this year after the increase last year. We need to slam our feet down together and soundly defeat

very small price to pay for the safety of your loved ones.

*Jennifer Wheeler  
Independence*

## Public safety levy a good investment

Vote yes on ballot measure 27-117 and vote by mail before May 19.

We really need to invest in peace of mind and security with response to 911 calls, and it makes sense to invest in personal protection and protection of our property.

An investment in public safety maintains property values and lowers insurance rates. It also attracts new businesses and residents, which adds to the tax base and improves the local economy. Yes, there will be a small increase in property taxes, but the return on that investment is huge. Should the levy fail — there could be tremendous costs.

*Gene Henshaw  
Dallas*

## Make more cuts before taxing

Local taxes and fees keep moving up. Federal taxes and state taxes increase each year.

The economy is struggling in Polk County, foreclosures and businesses closing. Now we are being asked to vote to increase our own property taxes with the safety tax levy. Everyone wants to be safe! But we need our government, on all levels, to be willing to make tough decisions, prioritize safety spending, cut "wish list" programs first. It isn't just "a cup of coffee a day," it's an 800-pound gorilla. Insist on financially responsible government, vote no on the safety tax increase.

*Rachel Daberkow  
Independence*

## Time to pay it forward with levy

I spent 40-plus years serving the residents of Dallas and Polk County as an EMT/paramedic firefighter. Many times during that service, Polk County deputies made the difference on whether my partner and I returned safely to our family. Sending our emergency service personnel out to help members of our community without deputy assistance is selfish and a crime. Vehicle accidents, domestic issues, and health emergencies require additional assistance from public safety officers. Money is tight but it's time

to "pay it forward," support the public safety levy.

Retired Fire Chief, Dallas Fire & SW Polk Co.

*Bill Hahn  
Dallas*

## 24-hour patrol coverage needed

Polk County resources have been severely impacted due to federal timber revenue reductions. The primary issue is restoring 24-hour county police patrol. Imagine yourself or family at 3 a.m. when someone is breaking into your home. You call 911 and are told that no Polk County officers are available to respond. This could be deadly! Having police patrol only from noon to 10 p.m. is not acceptable. By supporting this levy, 22 positions will be restored to increase police patrol, support the jail, support the district attorney's office, and increase detention beds for juvenile offenders.

*Eileen Brown  
West Salem*

## Funding for public safety has fallen

The 2007 budget authorized 19 deputies to patrol and 22 in the jail. The 2014 budget authorized six deputies to patrol and 20 in the jail. Jail population in 1990 was about 40, today about 120. County population has increased, so has the criminal activity. Criminals in the county conduct those same activities in the cities. 1990 timber revenue was about 2.4 million per year and today is 20 percent of that.

The sheriff augments authorized personnel with more than 120 unpaid volunteers. Need for the law enforcement levy is because of low revenue, not mis-spending.

*Randy Sitton  
Dallas*

## Want to write?

Letters to the editor are limited to 300 words. Longer letters will be edited. Election-related letters of all types are limited to 100 words. Writers are limited to one election-related letter per election season. Election letters from writers outside of Polk County are not accepted.

Each writer is restricted to one letter per 30-day period. The deadline for letters to the editor is 10 a.m. Monday.

Reach us at: **Email:** [ionews@polkio.com](mailto:ionews@polkio.com)  
**Office:** 147 SE Court St., Dallas.

# ON THE BALLOT

### Itemizer-Observer staff report

**POLK COUNTY** — Ballots for the May 19 Special District Election will be mailed out on Thursday. Ballots are due by 8 p.m. on May 19.

Here's what you can expect to see when you receive your ballot:

**Ash Creek Water Control District:** Position 4, Dan Farnworth. No candidate filed for Position 1, Position 2, Position 6 or Position 8, all four-year

terms.

**Buell Red Prairie Water District:** Position 4, four years, Mark A. Millikan; Position 5, four years, Wendell Lux; Position 2, two years, no candidate filed.

**Central School District 13J:** Position 1, four years, Steven F. Moser; Position 2, two years, no candidate filed; Position 3, four years, Seven A. Love; Position 5, four years, Kathy Zehner; Position 7, four years, no candidate

filed.

**Dallas Cemetery District:** Position 3, four years, John Barbour; Position 5, four years, Rod Watson.

**Dallas School District No. 2:** Position 2, four years, Matt Posey; Position 5, four years, Michael Bollman.

**Falls City School District No. 57:** Position 2, four years, Bob Young; Position 4, four years, Jami L. Kidd.

**Fir Crest Cemetery District:**

One position, four years, Christy L. Riddell.

**Hilltop Cemetery District:** One position, four years, Mary A. McDaniel.

**Pedee Cemetery District:** Position 3, four years, Tom K. Griffith.

**Perrydale School District No. 21:** Position 1, four years, John W. Cruickshank Jr.; Position 4, four years, Anna M. Scharf.

**Polk County Fire District**

**No. 1:** Position 1, four years, Tom N. Snair; Position 4, four years, Joe Franko; Position 5, four years, Mike Lippsmeyer.

**Rock Creek Water District:** Three positions, each four-year terms, Roy Steele, Stan M. Mills, Leonard Fischer.

**Salt Creek Cemetery District:** One position, four years, Marvin A. Morey.

**Southwest Rural Fire Protection District:** Position 2, four years, Frank W. Pender Jr;

Position 4, four years, Robert T. Davis.

**Spring Valley Rural Fire Protection District:** Position 2, four years, no candidate filed; Position 3, four years, Virginia L. Nelke Roberg; Position 4, four years, Anne M. Cupich.

**Measure 27-117:** Polk County Public Safety Local Option Tax Authorization.  
Yes  
No

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