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Taxpayers Association says NO on Proposition 1 and YES on Measure A

Watchdog criticizes the use ballot-box budgeting in Proposition 1; praises the independence Measure A would allow city auditor

San Diego, CA (February 13, 2024) --- The San Diego County Taxpayers Association (SDCTA) announced today its opposition to Proposition 1 and support for Measure A; the two main ballot items that San Diegans are voting on in this year's primary.

Proposition 1, the statewide initiative that claims to focus on housing and homelessness, is clear ballot-box budgeting that will not help California improve mental health nor address homelessness effectively and efficiently. According to SDCTA, Prop 1 would add a layer of bureaucracy at the state level between the mental health patient and treatment, weaken local treatment efforts by diverting funds, and commits the California taxpayer to thirty years of bond debt for vaguely defined facilities. The Association is also concerned that the growth in homelessness and housing resources has actually worsened, and not improved, the biggest challenges that California faces.

"I can understand the frustrations that taxpayers have and how Proposition 1 sounds like a silver bullet for our housing and homelessness challenges," said Haney Hong, president and CEO of the San Diego County Taxpayers Association. "But the more and more we centralize through ballot box budgeting maneuvers like this, the farther and farther we get from actually making a difference. Don't let politicians hide behind words like housing or homelessness to trick you into something foolish."

On the issue of Measure A, Association members met with both the city auditor and the city attorney to hear their perspectives on the challenges faced by the city auditor. Fundamentally, the question is what the governmental checks and balances should be between the two professional disciplines, especially when there is a legitimate conflict and reasonable difference between how each would perform their duties.

Ultimately, the Association supports Measure A and wants to strengthen the independence of the city auditor's office to ensure that it is free to fulfill its duties without pressure from the same government it investigates. While Measure A alone will not fix all the challenges relating to their independence – and the city attorney has some concerns that need to be thoughtfully considered – the Association believes that when there is a conflict between the two, the city auditor should have access to independent counsel separate from the city attorney.

"In this decision, the Taxpayers Association recognizes that special investigative tools, like being able to hire an independent attorney, are needed by the auditor's office to effectively expose fraud, waste, and abuse" suggests Mike McLaughlin, Chairman of SDCTA. "Following the Auditor's investigating of the 101 Ash Street debacle, it seems clear that the office must be strengthened. Prop A is an important step in the right direction."

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The San Diego County Taxpayers Association (SDCTA) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization,



dedicated to promoting accountable, cost-effective, and efficient government and opposing unnecessary new taxes and fees. For the last 78 years, SDCTA has served as “*San Diego’s Taxpayer Watchdog Group*” by educating the public and helping to save the region’s citizens millions of dollars. Public opinion polls consistently rate SDCTA as the most “influential” and “trusted” public policy institution in San Diego. The membership is led by President & CEO Haney Hong. SDCTA envisions a future where San Diego citizens receive a better return on investment in public assets and services. For more information, please visit www.sdcta.org, [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) or call 619-234-6423.