

ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE CC

THE LAGUNA BEACH OPEN SPACE ACQUISITION AND PRESERVATION PARCEL TAX MEASURE

When there is a legitimate opportunity to add land acquisition to our successful open space program, that is a good thing for our community. Imposing a special tax to fund a vaguely defined property acquisition program, is not. This special parcel tax not only sets a philosophical precedent which goes against common sense, but it creates a \$20 million tax levy on all private property owners, takes away real estate tax income on property currently owned and, adds the cost of maintenance and liability for newly acquired land.

A special tax should be approved only if one of two conditions exists: an emergency has occurred for which there is no other funding such as the 2005 Bluebird Canyon slide; or, a unique opportunity for purchase becomes available such as Measure H, for the Canyon open space.

Neither one of these conditions exist. The previous bond Measure H was levied to pay for land already under contract. The parcel tax is earmarked for purchase of an unstated quantity of privately owned parcels of unknown price.

Most of the open space that will be purchased with tax dollars under this program is open because the parcels are either too small to be usable, are unbuildable, or are not accessible by city streets. Although limited to "willing sellers", the combined effect of strict controls on development and costs of private ownership of unusable land will make many owners not only willing but eager to sell unused parcels to the city for windfall profits. Developer speculation on unbuildable sites could cost the city millions.

Finally, only \$40,000/year is dedicated to its maintenance. Acquisition of these lands by the city will benefit few but create new costs and liabilities for the entire community.

VOTE NO ON THE PARCEL TAX.

s/ Bobbi Cox, Realtor

s/ Steve Dicterow, former Mayor

s/ Michele Hall, President Laguna Beach Republicans

s/ Cheryl Kinsman, CPA, former Mayor

s/ Martha Lydick, Laguna Beach Taxpayers Association