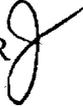


EXHIBIT NO. 1

7
4-16-11 ~~7
3-12-11~~

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 8, 2011
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL
FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 
SUBJECT: PROPOSED REAL AND PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX RATES
ORDINANCES AND PROPOSED EFFECTIVE TAX RATE INCREASE FOR
CALENDAR YEAR 2011 (FISCAL YEAR 2012)

ISSUE: What real property (residential and commercial) and personal property tax rates should be adopted.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Introduce the ordinance and pass it on first reading after establishing the tax rates to be advertised for residential and commercial real property and personal property; and
- (2) Schedule the ordinance for public hearing on Saturday, April 16, and second reading and final passage on Monday, May 2.

The maximum rates authorized by City Council in the attached ordinance reflect:

1. A base real estate tax rate on residential, commercial and industrial property for calendar year 2011 of \$___ per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation;
2. An add-on real estate tax rate on non-residential commercial and industrial property for calendar year 2011 to be dedicated for transportation purposes of \$___ per one hundred dollars of valuation;
4. Assumed in this proposed amount is the continued dedication of 0.3% of real estate tax revenues for the Open Space Trust Fund Account to pay debt service costs on prior year borrowing for open space properties, the continued dedication of 0.6 cents for affordable housing, and the continued dedication of 0.5 cents for a stormwater infrastructure trust fund account;
5. A personal property tax rate on vehicles and business tangible property for calendar year 2011 of \$4.75 per one hundred dollars of valuation; and

6. Tax rates on other classes of personal property are not proposed to change for calendar year 2011.

DISCUSSION: Under the requirements of The Code of Virginia (“The Code”), the City Council annually must establish real property and personal property tax rates for each calendar year. The Code also establishes certain advertising and public hearing requirements prior to the adoption of these property tax rates. One of these Code requirements is that the rates that Council chooses to advertise are the highest rates that Council can consider adopting when they vote on the budget and set tax rates on May 2.

It should be noted, as discussed below, that the State Code requires a separate public hearing (i.e., separate from the budget hearing on March 7) on the real property tax rate if the rates levied for the year in which the proposed tax rate applies would increase by more than one percent (after the value of new construction has been deducted). An increase of more than one percent is termed by statute an “effective tax rate increase.” This would be the case in CY 2011 as taxes levied at a \$0.978 rate would increase 2.91 percent for all classes of real property (after the value of new construction has been deducted). Also, State law requires, in the circumstance of an increase in taxes levied in excess of 1%, to maintain or increase the current real property tax rate, that a special “notice of proposed real property tax increase” in a specific format and language be placed in a local newspaper of general circulation. We plan that the separate hearing on the “effective real property tax increase” be held on April 16, with the special notice of the hearing date, as required specifically by State statute, printed in two newspapers prior to that hearing. The advertisements will be placed in the Alexandria Times and the Washington Examiner on March 17, 30 days prior to the public hearing.

I propose that City Council act on Saturday, March 12, to establish the maximum real estate tax and personal property tax rates which will be advertised in advance of the April 16 public hearing on the tax ordinances to be considered, including any special commercial real estate tax for transportation purposes.

The following is the planned schedule for calendar year 2011 (FY 2012):

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Topic:</u>
March 7	Budget Public Hearing
March 12	Council sets maximum real estate tax rates and personal property tax rate to be advertised
April 16	Public hearing on the real and personal property tax rates and property tax related ordinance
April 16	Public hearing on effective tax rate increase
May 2	Final adoption of the budget and related tax ordinances

The FY 2012 proposed operating budget reflects no increase in the residential real property tax rate of \$0.978 per \$100. Each 1¢ increase or decrease in this rate would change revenue estimates by \$1.59 million in FY 2011 and \$3.26 million in FY 2012 (totals \$4.85 million per 1¢). The proposed budget offered a proposal to fund transportation projects in the Capital Improvement Program with a \$0.125 Transportation Add-On Tax rate for non-

residential commercial and industrial properties. The optional increase to the commercial and industrial tax rate of 12.5 cents for transportation purposes would raise an additional \$18.2 million in FY 2012, including \$6.0 million from the June 2011 real property tax payment. A separate ordinance is being introduced to set the planned \$0.20 real estate tax rate, in addition to the regular property tax rate to help finance a planned Metrorail Station, for properties located in the Tier I Special Services District in Potomac Yard.

The proposed budget and the proposed ordinance assume the continuation of the dedication of 0.6 cents of the base real estate tax rate for affordable housing and 0.3 percent of the real estate tax revenues for open space (exclusive of any add-on tax for transportation purposes on commercial properties). In addition, the proposed budget assumes the continuation of the dedication of 0.5 cents for the Stormwater Management Infrastructure Trust Fund.

As part of the transportation funding initiatives which the General Assembly approved (HB3202) during its 2007 session, local governments in Northern Virginia were each given the option of a commercial real estate tax to be used for transportation purposes. Under the commercial real estate tax option, localities were authorized to adopt a differential real estate tax rate on non-residential commercial and industrial property in the City of no more than 25 cents per \$100 of value (apartments and all other residential property in the City would be excluded from this new tax). Non-residential commercial property includes office, retail, hotel, general commercial, industrial and public utility real property. During the 2009 session, the rate was capped at 12.5 cents. This rate will lapse in 2013 unless extended by the General Assembly, and the maximum will return to 25 cents. If the 12.5 cent increase in the commercial tax rate were adopted, the tax rate would be similar to the commercial tax rates in surrounding jurisdictions. Arlington County's add-on tax for commercial property is \$0.125 and Fairfax County's add on rate is \$0.11. Each increase of one cent of the commercial real estate add-on tax, if enacted, would generate \$0.5 million in FY 2011 and \$1.0 million in FY 2012.

The FY 2011 Proposed Operating budget reflects no change per \$100 of assessed value to the current various personal property tax rates:

- \$4.75 for tangible personal property;
- \$3.55 for vehicles with specially designed equipment for use by the physically disabled;
- \$4.50 for machinery and tools used in machinery and manufacturing business, and certain vehicles for hire; and
- \$.01 for privately-owned pleasure boats and watercraft that are used for recreational purposes only.

FISCAL IMPACT: The proposed tax of \$0.978 in the base real estate tax on each \$100 of assessed value is expected to generate \$307.0 million in FY 2011 and \$315.2 million in FY 2012. Each 1¢ increase or decrease in this rate would change revenue estimates by \$1.59 million in FY 2011 and \$3.26 million in FY 2012 (totals \$4.85 million per 1¢).

Since 2004 the City has dedicated a portion of real estate tax revenues to the acquisition and development of open space. The dedicated tax rate for open space started as \$0.01 of the real estate tax rate, and then in 2007 was changed to one percent of real estate tax revenues. In 2009,

the Open Space dedication was reduced to 0.3 percent. The 0.3 percent dedication will generate \$0.92 million in FY 2011 and \$0.95 million in FY 2012 to pay debt service costs on prior year borrowing for open space purposes.

In the FY 2010 Approved Budget, the City reduced its dedication for affordable housing to 0.7 cents. The FY 2011 budget reduced the dedication to 0.6 cents of the real estate tax rate, a maximum of \$1.955 million (depending on the issuance of new debt for the redevelopment of the James Bland housing project)¹. If Council chooses to change the affordable housing dedication, a separate ordinance will be required and introduced at the time the budget is approved.

In FY 2011 City Council approved the dedication of 0.5 cents for stormwater management. The half cent is expected to generate an estimated \$1.63 million in FY 2012 and will be used primarily for capital projects related to maintenance and improvements of the City's stormwater infrastructure.

The commercial real estate add-on tax, proposed at 12.5 cents on each \$100 of assessed value, if enacted, would generate \$6.0 million in FY 2011 from the June 2011 real property tax payment and \$12.2 million in FY 2012.

The Tier I Potomac Yard Special Services tax rate of 20 cents is projected to raise \$0.5 million in FY 2012.

ATTACHMENT: Proposed Ordinance

STAFF:

Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager
Michele Evans, Deputy City Manager
Bruce Johnson, Chief Financial Officer
Laura Triggs, Deputy Chief Financial Officer
Kendel Taylor, Assistant Budget Director

¹ The dedication of 0.7 cents is sufficient to cover three separate debt service costs in FY 2011: \$1,395,375 for \$15 million of debt issuance in 2006 for affordable housing, \$478,250 for \$5 million of debt issued in FY 2008 for Glebe Road ARHA property redevelopment and \$270,000 for \$3.1 million of possible debt to be issued for the James Bland ARHA property redevelopment. A new ordinance would have to be introduced to change the dedicated amount, but this could be done at the time of passage of the budget.

1	Introduction and first reading:	03/12/2011
2	Public hearing:	04/16/2011
3	Second reading and enactment:	05/02/2011

INFORMATION ON PROPOSED ORDINANCE

7 Title

9 AN ORDINANCE to amend and reordain Section 3-2-181 (LEVIED; AMOUNT) and
10 Section 3-2-188 (CLASSIFICATION AND TAXATION OF CERTAIN
11 COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY), of Division 1, (REAL
12 ESTATE), and Section 3-2-221 (LEVIED ON TANGIBLE PERSONAL
13 PROPERTY OTHER THAN MOBILE HOMES, AUTOMOBILES, TRUCKS,
14 ANTIQUE MOTOR VEHICLES, TAXICABS, MOTOR VEHICLES WITH
15 SPECIALLY DESIGNED EQUIPMENT FOR USE BY THE HANDICAPPED,
16 MOTORCYCLES, CAMPERS AND OTHER RECREATIONAL VEHICLES,
17 BOATS AND TRAILERS; AMOUNT), Section 3-2-222 (LEVIED ON
18 MACHINERY AND TOOLS USED IN MINING OR MANUFACTURING
19 BUSINESS; AMOUNT), Section 3-2-223 (LEVIED ON MOBILE HOMES;
20 AMOUNT), Section 3-2-224 (LEVIED ON AUTOMOBILES, TRUCKS,
21 TRAILERS, SEMI-TRAILERS ANTIQUE MOTOR VEHICLES, TAXICABS,
22 MOTORCYCLES, CAMPERS AND OTHER RECREATIONAL VEHICLES,
23 BOATS AND TRAILERS; AMOUNT) of Division 3 (TANGIBLE PERSONAL
24 PROPERTY AND MACHINERY AND TOOLS), all of Article M (LEVY AND
25 COLLECTION OF PROPERTY TAXES), Chapter 2 (TAXATION), Title 3
26 (FINANCE, TAXATION AND PROCUREMENT) of The Code of the City of
27 Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended.

30 Summary

32 The proposed ordinance sets the city's 2011 tax rates for (1) real property; (2)
33 personal property; (3) machinery and tools; and (4) for the additional real property
34 taxes assessed on commercial and industrial property.

36 0.3 percent of estimated 2011 real estate tax revenue continues to be set aside for
37 the Open Space Trust Fund to cover debt service on Open Space Trust Fund
38 supported bonds. 0.6 percent of estimated 2011 real estate tax revenue continues
39 to be set aside for affordable housing. 0.5 percent of estimated 2011 real estate
40 tax revenue continues to be set aside for the Storm Water Trust Fund.

42 The ordinance sets the 2011 real property tax rate at \$_____ on each \$100 of
43 assessed value. Personal property and machinery and tools tax rates are
44 unchanged from 2010. The ordinance levies for calendar year 2010, an
45 additional real property tax of \$_____ per \$100 of assessed value on all

1 commercial and industrial property in the City. City Council has the authority to
2 lower the tax rates set forth in the ordinance.

3

4 Sponsor

5

6

7 Staff

8

9 Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager
10 Bruce Johnson, Chief Financial Officer
11 Laura Triggs, Deputy Chief Financial Officer
12 Christina Zechman Brown, Assistant City Attorney

13

14 Authority

15

16 Article X, § 4, Virginia Constitution
17 §§ 2.02(a)(1), 6.15 Alexandria City Charter
18 § 58.1-3221.3, Code of Virginia

19

20 Estimated Costs of Implementation

21

22 None.

23

24 Attachments in Addition to Proposed Ordinance and its Attachments (if any)

25

26 None.

27

28

ORDINANCE NO. _____

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AN ORDINANCE to amend and reordain Section 3-2-181 (LEVIED; AMOUNT) and Section 3-2-188 (CLASSIFICATION AND TAXATION OF CERTAIN COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY), of Division 1, (REAL ESTATE), and Section 3-2-221 (LEVIED ON TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY OTHER THAN MOBILE HOMES, AUTOMOBILES, TRUCKS, ANTIQUE MOTOR VEHICLES, TAXICABS, MOTOR VEHICLES WITH SPECIALLY DESIGNED EQUIPMENT FOR USE BY THE HANDICAPPED, MOTORCYCLES, CAMPERS AND OTHER RECREATIONAL VEHICLES, BOATS AND TRAILERS; AMOUNT), Section 3-2-222 (LEVIED ON MACHINERY AND TOOLS USED IN MINING OR MANUFACTURING BUSINESS; AMOUNT), Section 3-2-223 (LEVIED ON MOBILE HOMES; AMOUNT), Section 3-2-224 (LEVIED ON AUTOMOBILES, TRUCKS, TRAILERS, SEMI-TRAILERS ANTIQUE MOTOR VEHICLES, TAXICABS, MOTORCYCLES, CAMPERS AND OTHER RECREATIONAL VEHICLES, BOATS AND TRAILERS; AMOUNT) of Division 3 (TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY AND MACHINERY AND TOOLS), all of Article M (LEVY AND COLLECTION OF PROPERTY TAXES), Chapter 2 (TAXATION), Title 3 (FINANCE, TAXATION AND PROCUREMENT) of The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended.

THE CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA HEREBY ORDAINS:

Section 1. That Section 3-2-181 of The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended, be, and the same hereby is, amended and reordained to read as follows:

Sec. 3-2-181 Levied; amount.

There shall be levied and collected for the calendar year 2011~~0~~ on all real estate located within the territorial boundaries of the city and subject to taxation for city purposes under the constitution and laws of this state and city, a tax of \$___ on each \$100 of the assessed residential property value thereof and \$___ on each \$100 of the assessed commercial residential property value thereof, for the support of the city government, for the payment of principal and interest of the city debt and for other municipal expenses and purposes.

Section 2. That Sec. 3-2-188 of The Code of the City of Alexandria, 1981 as amended, be, and the same hereby is, amended and reordained to read as follows:

Sec. 3-2-188 Classification and taxation of certain commercial and industrial real property.

(a) Pursuant to the authority granted by Section 58.1-3221.3 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, all commercial and industrial real property in the City of Alexandria classified by the General Assembly as a separate class of real property for local taxation shall be designated, assessed and taxed as a separate class of real

1 property. Such separate class of real property shall not include any residential uses
2 excluded by Section 58.1-3221.3 of the Code of Virginia.

3

4 (b) In addition to all other taxes and fees permitted by law, the class of real
5 property designated in this section may, and if imposed by ordinance shall, be subject to a
6 real property tax, in addition to that imposed by City Code Section 3-2-181 and any other
7 applicable law, at the rate established by the City Council of the City of Alexandria
8 not to exceed the rate authorized by the Code of Virginia.

9

10 (c) All revenues generated from the real property tax imposed by this Section
11 3-2-188 shall be used exclusively for transportation-related projects and services that benefit
12 the City of Alexandria.

13

14 (d) The real property tax imposed by this Section 3-2-188 shall be levied,
15 administered, enforced and collected in the same manner as set forth in Subtitle III of Title
16 58.1 of the Code of Virginia and Chapter 2 of this Title for the levy, administration,
17 enforcement and collection of local taxes.

18

19 (e) The director of the department of real estate assessments shall separately
20 assess and set forth upon the City of Alexandria's land book the fair market value of that
21 property that is designated as a separate class of real property in accordance with the
22 provisions of this section.

23

24 (f) There shall be levied and collected for the calendar year 2011~~0~~ on all real
25 estate located within the territorial boundaries of the city and subject to taxation
26 pursuant to this section, a tax of \$___ on each \$100 of the assessed value thereof, for the
27 purposes set forth in subsection (c) above.

28

29 Section 3. That Section 3-2-221 of The Code of the City of Alexandria,
30 Virginia, 1981, as amended, be, and the same hereby is, amended and reordained to read as
31 follows:

32

33 Sec. 3-2-221 Levied on tangible personal property other than mobile homes, automobiles,
34 trucks, antique motor vehicles, taxicabs, motor vehicles with specially
35 designed equipment for use by the handicapped, motorcycles, campers and
36 other recreational vehicles, boats and boat trailers; amount.

37

38 There shall be levied and collected for the calendar year 2011~~0~~ on all tangible
39 personal property, other than mobile homes, automobiles, trucks, antique motor vehicles,
40 taxicabs, motor vehicles with specially designed equipment for use by the handicapped,
41 motorcycles, campers and other recreational vehicles, boats and trailers, owned or held by
42 residents or citizens of the city or located within the territorial boundaries of the city or
43 otherwise having a situs within the city and subject to taxation for city purposes under the
44 constitution and laws of this state and city, a tax of \$4.75 on every \$100 of assessed value
45 thereof, for the support of the city government, for the payment of principal and interest of
46 the city debt and for other municipal expenses and purposes.

47

1 Section 4. That Section 3-2-222 of The Code of the City of Alexandria,
2 Virginia, 1981, as amended, be, and the same hereby is, amended and reordained to read as
3 follows:
4

5 Sec. 3-2-222 Levied on machinery and tools used in mining or manufacturing business;
6 amount.
7

8 There shall be levied and collected for the calendar year 2011~~0~~ on all machinery and
9 tools used in a mining or manufacturing business taxable on capital and subject to taxation
10 for city purposes under the constitution and laws of this state and city, a tax of \$4.50 on each
11 \$100 of assessed value thereof, for the support of the city government, for the payment of
12 principal and interest of the city debt and for other municipal expenses and purposes.
13

14 Section 5. That Section 3-2-223 of The Code of the City of Alexandria,
15 Virginia, 1981, as amended, be, and the same hereby is, amended and reordained to read as
16 follows:
17

18 Sec. 3-2-223 Levied on mobile homes; amount.
19

20 There shall be levied and collected for the calendar year 2011~~0~~ on all vehicles
21 without motor power, used or designed to be used as mobile homes as defined in section
22 46.2-100 of the Code of Virginia, owned or held by residents or citizens of the city or
23 located within the territorial boundaries of the city or otherwise having a situs within the
24 city and subject to taxation for city purposes under the constitution and laws of this state and
25 city, a tax of \$0.978 on each \$100 of assessed value thereof, for the support of the city
26 government, for the payment of principal and interest of the city debt and for other
27 municipal expenses and purposes.
28

29 Section 6. That Section 3-2-224 of The Code of the City of Alexandria,
30 Virginia, 1981, as amended, be, and the same hereby is, amended and reordained to read as
31 follows:
32

33 Sec. 3-2-224 Levied on automobiles, trucks, trailers, semi-trailers, antique motor vehicles,
34 taxicabs, motorcycles, campers and other recreational vehicles, boats and
35 trailers; amount.
36

37 (a) Except as provided in subsections (b), (c) and (d), there shall be levied and
38 collected for the calendar year 2011~~0~~ on all automobiles, trucks, trailers, semi-trailers,
39 antique motor vehicles (as defined in section 46.2-100 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as
40 amended, which may be used for general transportation purposes as provided in subsection
41 C of section 46.2-730 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended), taxicabs, motorcycles,
42 campers and other recreational vehicles, boats and boat trailers owned or held by residents
43 or citizens of the city or located within the territorial boundaries of the city or otherwise
44 having a situs for taxation in the city, a tax of \$4.75 on every \$100 of assessed value thereof,
45 for the support of the city government, for the payment of principal and interest of the city
46 debt and for other municipal expenses and purposes.
47

48 (b) There shall be levied on and collected for the calendar year 2011~~0~~ on all
49 automobiles, trucks, trailers and semi-trailers with a gross vehicle weight of 10,000 pounds

1 or more which are used to transport property for hire by a motor carrier engaged in interstate
2 commerce, and are owned or held by residents or citizens of the city, are located within the
3 territorial boundaries of the city or otherwise have a situs for taxation in the city, a tax of
4 \$4.50 on every \$100 of assessed value thereof, for the support of the city government, for
5 the payment of principal and interest of the city debt and for other municipal expenses and
6 purposes.

7
8 (c) There shall be levied on and collected for the calendar year 2011~~0~~ on all
9 automobiles and trucks which are equipped with specially designed equipment for use by
10 the handicapped and are owned or held by residents or citizens of the city, are located within
11 the territorial boundaries of the city or otherwise have a situs for taxation in the city, a tax of
12 \$3.55 on every \$100 of assessed value thereof, for the support of the city government, for
13 the payment of principal and interest of the city debt and for other municipal expenses and
14 purposes.

15
16 (d) There shall be levied on and collected for the calendar year 2011~~0~~ on all
17 privately owned pleasure boats and watercraft, which are used for recreational purposes
18 only, and are owned or held by residents or citizens of the city, or are located within the
19 territorial boundaries of the city or otherwise have a situs for taxation in the city, a tax of
20 \$.01 on every \$100 of assessed value thereof, for the support of the city government, for the
21 payment of principal and interest of the city debt and for other municipal expenses and
22 purposes.

23
24 (e) For tax years commencing in 2006, the City adopts the provisions of Item
25 503.E of Chapter 951 of the 2005 Acts of Assembly (the 2005 revisions to the 2004-06
26 Appropriations Act, the "2005 Appropriations Act"), providing for the computation of tax
27 relief under the Personal Property Tax Relief Act of 1998, sections 58.1-3523 et seq. of the
28 Code of Virginia, as amended, as a specific dollar amount to be offset against the total taxes
29 that would otherwise be due but for the Personal Property Tax Relief Act of 1998, sections
30 58.1-3523 et seq. of the Code of Virginia, as amended, and the reporting of such specific
31 dollar relief on the tax bill.

32
33 (i) The City shall, following adoption of the annual budget adopted pursuant to
34 Chapter 25 of Title 15.2 of the Code of Virginia and sections 6.01 through 6.15 of the City
35 Charter, set the rate of tax relief under this subsection at such a level that it is anticipated
36 fully to exhaust relief funds under the Personal Property Tax Relief Act of 1998, sections
37 58.1-3523 et seq. of the Code of Virginia, as amended, provided to the City by the
38 Commonwealth. Any amount of relief funds under the Personal Property Tax Relief Act of
39 1998, sections 58.1-3523 et seq. of the Code of Virginia, as amended, provided to the City
40 by the Commonwealth, not used within the City's fiscal year shall be carried forward and
41 used to increase the funds available for personal property tax relief under this subsection in
42 the following fiscal year.

43
44 (ii) Personal property tax bills shall set forth on their face the specific dollar amount
45 of relief under this subsection credited with respect to each qualifying vehicle, together with
46 an explanation of the general manner in which such relief is allocated.

47

1 (iii) Allocation of relief under this subsection shall be provided in accordance with
2 the general provisions of this section, as implemented by the specific provisions of the
3 City's annual budget relating to relief under this subsection.
4

5 (iv) Relief under this subsection shall be allocated in such as manner as to eliminate
6 personal property taxation of each qualifying vehicle with an assessed value of \$1,000 or
7 less.
8

9 (v) Relief under this subsection with respect to qualifying vehicles with assessed
10 values of more than \$1,000 shall be provided at a rate, annually fixed in the City budget and
11 applied to the first \$20,000 in value of each such qualifying vehicle, that is estimated fully
12 to use all relief funds under the Personal Property Tax Relief Act of 1998, sections 58.1-
13 3523 et seq. of the Code of Virginia, as amended, provided to the City by the
14 Commonwealth.
15

16 Section 7. That this ordinance shall become effective January 1, 2011, nunc pro
17 tunc.
18

19 WILLIAM D. EUILLE
20 Mayor
21

22 Introduction: 03/12/2011
23 First Reading: 03/12/2011
24 Publication:
25 Public Hearing:
26 Second Reading:
27 Final Passage:
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4-16-11

April 16, 2011

#7. Public Hearing on an Ordinance to Establish the Real Estate and Personal Property Tax Rates for Calendar Year 2011

The Honorable Mayor and City Council
City of Alexandria, Virginia

Honorable Mayor Euille and Alexandria City Council members, thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Bill Pugh; I live at 1200 North Quaker Lane in Alexandria. **I strongly support the transportation add-on tax.** My family does not own a car and we live out in the middle/western part of the City, where getting around by foot, by bike or by transit can sometimes be difficult, if not downright unsafe, so this topic is very important to me and the rest of my family.

Thus my interest in the issue is as a resident of Alexandria, one who gets around by the City's transit system, by bicycle and by foot every day. I should note, as a matter of disclosure, that I currently work in the field of transportation planning and that the large firm I work for does business with the City of Alexandria in transportation planning. However, this is just a small portion of my office's work. So, again, I am speaking today as a resident who cares about the future of the city I live in and wants my family to be able to get around safely and comfortably and to continue to do so using modes of transportation that are sustainable, both environmentally and economically, over the long term.

Reason # 1 to have a dedicated funding source for needed transportation improvements is Basic Safety.

If you've tried to get around by foot, by bike or by transit in the Duke Street Corridor, the King-Quaker-Braddock area or the West End – you know that there are places where your safety is compromised. People simply running errands or going to work shouldn't be placed in dangerous situations because of outdated roadway designs or lack of pedestrian and bicycle accommodations.

The improvements that would be supported by the Manager's proposed budget and the transportation add-on tax would improve safety for my family and my neighbors. The complete streets improvements proposed for Duke Street and the improvements to the Beauregard and King intersection are needed for basic public safety, and we shouldn't have to delay these indefinitely because of a lack of funding.

I cross the street in front of Bradlee Shopping Center everyday – either going to work on my bike or walking to catch a bus. Often on the weekend I am pushing my daughter in the stroller across King Street to go catch an express bus to the Pentagon metro to take her into the District. The intersections in front of Bradlee are simply not safe for pedestrians or for drivers. I commend the City for prioritizing improvements like this and

proposing a reasonable way to fund them. Arlington and Fairfax already fund and implement transportation improvements through a similar tax.

A second reason for dedicated funding: Improving the safety and conveniences of getting around will ensure that Alexandria remains a desirable place to do business, to live and to visit. For example, if it's safer, easier and less stressful to get in and out of Bradlee Shopping Center, and if people can walk instead of having to drive, that benefits the businesses there. The intersection improvements to King-Quaker-Braddock and the proposed transit center that would be funded by the tax will simply make the area a more attractive place to shop, visit the doctor or go to for other services. More broadly speaking: tackling congestion and providing sustainable options for getting around will ensure that Alexandria remains a good business location and place to live.

Lastly, local transportation funding sources are only going to become more important over the next decade. Revenues for state and federal transportation are in decline and there is no political will to increase them. Local communities in Virginia can expect fewer transportation dollars from the Commonwealth and from the federal government over the long term. Fortunately, Alexandria is being proactive in seeking to adopt a dedicated local funding source for transportation. For the City to remain a competitive place to attract business and residents, it will need to address its transportation challenges over the coming years.

Thank you for your time. I hope you will all vote to adopt the proposed Transportation Add-on tax recommended by the City Manager.

William Pugh
1200 N Quaker Ln
Alexandria, VA 22302

ALEXANDRIA CITY COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING ON COMMERCIAL ADD-ON TAX
April 16, 2011

7
4-16-11

I'm John Renner;
Alexandria **resident**,
Alexandria **business owner**,
and **member of BFAAC**,

and I am here today as a member of the Board of Directors
of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce.

The commercial add-on tax is a **problem**.
You've heard about the **burden** it would place on Alexandria businesses,
You may also have heard
that **Arlington** Businesses plan to go to Richmond next year
to have it **repealed**.

Let's not rely on it in Alexandria.

The Commercial add-on tax is avoidable,
There are valid alternatives,
I would like to discuss **three**:

1. Remove the proposed BPOL cut.
I am an advocate of BPOL relief, but **not this proposal**.
As proposed, it's not relief across the board,
It's just for a few.
The City is not getting the most "bang for its buck" with this proposal,
because
It probably **doesn't** help the businesses that benefit Alexandria the most.

Furthermore, a cut in BPOL
provides **no** relief
to one of Alexandria's largest industries;
our associations and other nonprofits.

Our associations and nonprofits would get hit with the commercial add on tax on their offices, but would get no offset from lowering the BPOL, **because they don't pay BPOL in the first place.**

BPOL relief is a separate issue and should not be part of the commercial add-on tax issue.

If you remove the proposed BPOL relief from the budget, you **don't need** as much commercial add-on tax.

If you scrap the BPOL cut, you could cut down the commercial add-on tax by **more than a cent-and-a-half.**

1.6 m
.975 m
1.64

2. Two: Be **more selective** about the proposed transportation projects.

It is **admirable** that City staff spent time identifying the priority transportation projects in collaboration with the Transportation Commission. However, there are **too many priorities on the list.** **The total** of the proposed projects **exceeds** what we are willing to pay.

Some of the proposed projects are more important than others, Some are more urgent than others, and some of them have little relationship to business. A neighborhood walking trail or bike path is a valuable asset, but if you have to burden businesses with an unpopular tax to do it, it becomes less attractive.

The list of priority transportation projects needs to be **shortened.** If you postpone or delete some of the projects on the list, you don't need as much commercial Add-on tax.

3. The third component of my proposed solution is this:

The priority projects that remain,
those projects that are **needed most**
and wanted
by everyone,

should be **paid for equally by everyone.**

One cent on **everyone's** real estate tax
would provide \$3.2 million dollars for top priority transportation projects.

If these projects are truly priorities to **everyone** in the city,
then **everyone** in the city should share in funding them.

The Commercial add-on tax is **avoidable**,
There are **valid alternatives**,
I urge you to **use** these alternatives
to **remove the commercial add-on tax** from the budget.

Thank you.

7

4-16-11

April 16, 2011

TO: Mayor Euille, Vice Mayor Donley, and Council members
FROM: Annabelle Fisher
RE: Budget – suggestions and deletions

Here are the following items I hope you will consider as you work through city budget and include in the budget add/deletes. Perhaps the most regressive tax Alexandria taxpayers have to contend with is the tax on food at the grocery store. I understand that Alexandria has the ability to impose these taxes along with the State of Va., but I am asking that you eliminate this food tax asap. For other taxes, Alex. double taxes, i.e., restaurant tax, tax on cleaning clothes at the cleaners, etc. This food tax is irresponsible and unfair to all residents of Alex. No matter what their income. Alexandria already double taxes for everything, so where's the money?

1. All members of the council, city manager, assistant city managers and all department administrators should pay to park in the city garage as do the citizens of Alexandria. There is no reason why everyone should be parking in city garage for free, 24-7. This monthly charge could be around \$25. Alexandria taxpayers pay our top administrators quite well and they can afford to pay. With regard to Mayor/Council parking for free and only working p/t, everyone knew how much money you would be earning when you ran for office and again, all of you can afford to pay, since you get to park for free any time. I feel this should be implemented as part of budget.
2. New Police Bldg. When council approved the new Police headquarters in 2009 at a cost of \$90 million dollars, police dept. and their consultants made it very clear they would not need any more money and this cost would cover everything police dept. requested. Thus, I see no reason to give an additional \$2 million. This \$2+ million dollars could be applied to transportation projects rather than imposing a 12.5 % add on tax for small businesses in Alex.
3. The city generates about \$2+ million dollars in parking tickets and I believe it is time for you to put this money into the police budget and not the general fund. Its time to “think out of the box” and change the way you do business with the money generated from parking tickets and other related police activities.
- 4 ACPS receives the largest amount of tax dollars. Why? When Pat Mann gave a presentation to the Council regarding the census, it was clear that there will be a decrease in the number of families moving into the area. So, is there really a need to build more elementary schools? If anything, what I'm hearing is that families who have children would move out of Alexandria to send their children to another school system. I also understand you have no control over how much money Mr. Sherman and the school board spend on administrative salaries, consultants and administration. However, I feel it is important to review how much they do spend along with the amount of money the taxpayers of Alexandria contribute to ACPS/CIP projects. Again, with a student population of about 11,000 students, ACPS is still spending way too much p/student – i.e. about \$15-16,000. This is a very small school district and they need to have an honest, outside audit from a group that they don't select.
5. Administrative salaries/early retirement for long term dept. administrators. We pay over \$100,00 dollars to at least 15 administrators/city manager/assistant city managers along with their benefit packages. Perhaps it is time to consider those persons who are close to retirement to think about taking early retirement. In Mr. Hartmann's budget from last year, very few jobs were lost, i.e. only 16 positions that were not filled and the only thing the city manager did was

to play “musical chairs” and move unnecessary positions into other staff positions by merger of some depts. This is very costly and needs to change and I believe you know there were some reassignments of staff to positions paying over \$100,000 that should have been eliminated or had salary reductions. Also, no administrative staff took a cut in pay for this budget – why

6. City cars/gas – Its time to review the use of city cars by many city employees. I feel this has been abused over the years and understand that some policy changes were made last year. Also, since the city, i.e. taxpayers pay for the gas for these cars, I believe its time to change this process, with the exception of police and fire. When I worked for CPS, Head Start, Visiting Nurse Services and any other social service agencies, I had to use my car and would submit receipts for gas based on per mileage allowed. I believe the city has to implement this policy. It will require that all city employees stop using city cars and use their own cars, submit receipts and initially have to be implemented via an “honor system”. If it is found that too many city employees are violating this change, then they should not be allowed to use city cars nor the gas pumps off of Duke street. For those city employees that do not own a car, but work in the same dept. needing to drive to places, i.e. Parks & Rec; Dept. of Human Services, the person who has a car and needing to go to the same destination, can go together. Gas prices are rising rapidly and taxpayers cannot continue to pay for gas for all city cars along with paying for gas for Alexandria residents. For city employees working for Dept. of Human Services and need to pick up items for their clients, but not transport them to some meeting, etc. they should be using their own cars to do so. There is no reason a city car needs to be used for grocery shopping, etc. Again, city employee can submit for gas mileage which would be more cost effective. In order to monitor this so there is no abuse of an employee using their own vehicle, obviously it has to be on the “honor system”, and dept. administrators can calculate the round trip mileage needed for such trips.

Money for Transportation: why don't you have it in place now? Alexandria's increasing development over the past several years should have been a red-flag that there would be money to pay for increased transportation. When I moved to Alex., in 1999, I learned that Alexandria did not want to look at transportation from a regional perspective. Well, now you are trying and in your attempts to raise the money are now looking at a 12.5% add on tax for business. What a great way to drive small businesses which are the “heart & soul” of Alexandria away. Bond money will be drying up as interest rates rise; my question: What is the money in the general fund doing? Yes, it is time that all city employees, no matter their title, begin to pay into their retirement/pension plan. I always had to and understand that Va. is one of 4 states wherein taxpayers contribute to employees pensions/retirement. What about the tax monies generated from the hotel/motel taxes along with the tax on food in restaurants and other revenue sources? Where's the money going that you now need to propose a 12.5% add on tax for small business? I do not support this tax and believe that the city manager and his assistant city managers dealing with the budget along with mayor/council have been too lax in the past and overlooked money that could be in the budget now from real estate properties the city could have sold but did not and now sit unused and abandoned.

It is time to pass a budget that is transparent, cuts spending, stop giving money to non-profits that cannot show outcomes, decrease the hiring of so many consultants for development plans that you pass but cannot be implemented due to the economy and continue to sit on the shelves somewhere, decrease the commercial real estate tax and eliminate the 12.5% add on tax. This is your charge and your fiduciary responsibility as elected officials.

7
4-16-11

Testimony

of

Adrien Cotton

Co-Owner

Fitness on the Run LLC

109 South Alfred Street

Alexandria VA 22314

www.fitnessontherun.net

To

Alexandria Mayor and City Council

April 16, 2011

Thank you Mr. Mayor and Members of the Council for the opportunity to participate in this hearing, and for your service to Alexandria. My name is Adrien Cotton. I'm the founder and co-owner of Fitness on the Run, located on South Alfred Street, next door to the Friendship Firehouse. We are a fitness and health firm practicing in both individual and group settings. As a resident of Alexandria for over 20 years, my business partner (also an Alexandria resident for over 12 years) and I appreciate the uniqueness of the area, as well as Council's efforts to balance competing interests.

I started my business seven years ago and have watched it grow through 3 different Alexandria locations and to now serve over 100 clients, most of who live in the greater Alexandria area. Despite a tough couple of years for all of us in the business community, Fitness on the Run was able to survive. We paid all of our bills and continue to operate without any loans. However, after paying our 10 trainers and one Business Manager—who also live in the area—as well as the existing taxes and fees associated with running a business in Alexandria, the business was left with just \$3,000 at the end of the year.

This proposed tax increase represents a third of that net gain for our firm. The increase would amount to an additional \$1,000 tax hit. As a committed business owner struggling to remain in the black during a tough economy, it is a hit we cannot afford to take. Make no mistake about it, we love running our business. What we enjoy most is seeing people make serious changes to their lifestyles that will ultimately increase their longevity. We also like that we serve the Alexandria Community. We are proud members of the Old Town Boutique District. It is, however, a business and it must remain profitable in order to remain viable. This tax increase puts that viability in jeopardy. To maintain the same level, we would have to make some tough decisions. This tax, on the heels of the increase in parking fees, (which we consider a hidden tax on business) is short-sighted.

I understand the improvement needs of other areas of the city, but asking small business owners who are struggling to stay afloat and keep Old Town vibrant to shoulder this burden in challenging economic times is absolutely the wrong decision. Old Town has fostered an image where residents and tourists alike can come to find unique small businesses like mine. Massive tax increases like this one are what drives owners like me to close our doors. As a long-time resident, as well as someone who cares for the 100 Alexandrians who walk through my doors each week, we can't kill off our small businesses and leave Old Town with chain stores and empty store fronts. This add-on tax should not move forward.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jack Sullivan

7
4-16-11

STATEMENT TO COUNCIL ON THE COMMERCIAL ADD-ON TAX - April 16, 2011

Mr. Mayor, Members of Council:

I am here today to ask you to eliminate the 12.5% percent Commercial Add-On Tax from budget consideration. It is an odd position for me to be agreeing with the Chamber of Commerce. As some of you know, we often have been on different sides of issues. Nevertheless, I oppose the tax on two grounds:

First, fairness. Is it fair to tax King Street merchants for road improvements far from their locations, when the resources will benefit other merchants who may turn out to be competitors? I am among those who don't think so.

Second and more important to the residents of Alexandrians west of Quaker Lane is the issue of how the money will be used.

The City Manager's Budget Memo #10 states that the funds are to be put toward "major re-development" in the Beaugard Corridor.

No City body has yet approved such major redevelopment. My civic association, Seminary Hill, has explicitly opposed any such major re-development.

You may be interested to know that, according to recently released city statistics, owners of the former Winkler Tract and adjacent properties still have more than 4.2 million square feet of additional development already available to them under the current Master Plan. That is 75% of existing densities, existing buildings that include the BRAC.

In short, there is no need for—and I quote the Budget Memo – "major redevelopment." Current development rights are mind-boggling enough.

After I spoke to Mr. Jinks last week asking for an explanation of this language, he and Mr. Baier sent me a letter this week explaining much of what I had already understood. It did not specifically address my question about "major redevelopment" and its relationship to the Add-On Tax. In fact, the letter raises new questions about the City Staff's objectivity toward additional densities in the area.

I am here this morning representing the Seminary Hill Assn., Inc. I have distributed a resolution adopted by the Executive Committee earlier this week opposing the tax. It speaks for itself. It is emblematic of the strong opposition of our residents to anything that facilitates new density and traffic in the Beaugard Corridor and on properties on Seminary Road east of I-395.

Clearly easing the traffic problems all over Alexandria is a worthy goal. It will take money to do that. But new revenues should be fairly raised and used to remedy current and near-term problems – not help create a new problem as the Commercial Add-On Tax threatens to do. Please vote it down and let's work together for other, better, solutions.

**SEMINARY HILL RESOLUTION ON THE PROPOSED 12.5 PERCENT
COMMERCIAL ADD-ON TAX**

Whereas, Budget Memo #10 from the City Manager states that the proposed Commercial Add-on Tax will be used to facilitate "major redevelopment " in the Beauregard Corridor' and

Whereas, no decision has been made by any official body in the City that major redevelopment in the Beauregard Corridor is appropriate and should occur; and

Whereas, the Seminary Hill Association, Inc., consistently has questioned the appropriateness of major redevelopment in that area, given the impending impact of BRAC, current traffic congestion, and effects on existing neighborhoods;

Therefore, the Executive Board of the Seminary Hill Association, Inc., opposes the imposition of the Commercial Add-On tax on the business community of Alexandria so long as the funds derived are used to facilitate major development in the Beauregard Corridor.

Adopted: Thursday, April 14, 2011

7
4-16-11

Jackie Henderson

From: Emily Brown <keybridgectr@verizon.net>
Sent: Friday, April 15, 2011 8:16 PM
To: William Euille; Frank Fannon; Kerry Donley; Alicia Hughes; Del Pepper; paulcsmedberg@aol.com; Rose Boyd; Jackie Henderson; Elaine Scott; Rob Krupicka; Linda Owens; Elizabeth Jones
Subject: COA Contact Us: Proposed property tax rate increase
Attachments: ATT00001..txt

COA Contact Us: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members

Time: [Fri Apr 15, 2011 20:15:45] **Message ID:** [29256]

Issue Type: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members
First Name: Emily
Last Name: Brown
Street Address: 701 N Pegram St
City: Alexandria
State: VA
Zip: 22304
Phone: 703-751-3883
Email Address: keybridgectr@verizon.net

Subject: Proposed property tax rate increase
This is not the time to raise property tax rates on individuals. However increasing the property tax on commercial interests is more appropriate because many of them have large profits, due in part to their location in Alexandria. Taxes on commercial interests need to be scaled, with small businesses paying nothing or a small amount, and the large businesses paying considerably more. Some of the large commercial interests in

Comments: Alexandria are responsible for tearing up Alexandria's streets and roads - thus they should also bear more of the costs for repairs.

I understand that Alexandria will receive no tax dollars from the BRAC building, despite the fact that transportation in the West End has already been negatively impacted and will be impossible once the building opens. It's time the military paid their share to cover the mess they have created.

7
4-16-11

Jackie Henderson

From: Brian Gordon <bgordon@aoba-metro.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 14, 2011 11:39 PM
To: William Euille; Frank Fannon; Kerry Donley; Alicia Hughes; Del Pepper; paulcsmedberg@aol.com; Rose Boyd; Jackie Henderson; Elaine Scott; Rob Krupicka; Linda Owens; Elizabeth Jones
Subject: COA Contact Us: Add-On Transportation Tax on Commercial Real Estate
Attachments: 6af5e72c7be135c8a23d489998504afa.doc; ATT00001.txt

COA Contact Us: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members

Time: [Thu Apr 14, 2011 23:39:09] **Message ID:** [29219]

Issue Type: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members
First Name: Brian
Last Name: Gordon
Street Address: 1050 17th Street, NW, Suite 350
City: Washington
State: DC
Zip: 20036
Phone: (703) 307-0564
Email Address: bgordon@aoba-metro.org
Subject: Add-On Transportation Tax on Commercial Real Estate
Attached please find comments submitted on behalf of the Apartment and Office Building Association regarding the proposed add-on transportation tax on commercial real estate. Thank you for your consideration.

Brian M. Gordon, MPA
Vice President, Government

Comments: Affairs, Virginia
Apartment & Office Building Association (AOBA)
of

Metropolitan Washington
1050 17th Street, NW, Suite 350
Washington, DC

20036
(202) 296-3390
(703) 307-0564 cell
bgordon@aoba-metro.org

Attachment: 6af5e72c7be135c8a23d489998504afa.doc



April 14, 2011

The Honorable William D. Euille, Mayor
City of Alexandria
301 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Dear Mayor Euille:

On behalf of the Apartment and Office Building Association (AOBA) of Metropolitan Washington, I write to voice opposition to the adoption of the commercial real estate tax surcharge for transportation as proposed by City staff. Our organization and its members maintain serious concerns with the potential consequences of full and immediate enactment of the new add-on tax at a rate of 12.5 cents per \$100 assessed value as staff has recommended. As you and your colleagues on the City Council deliberate, I hope that you will take the following considerations under advisement.

AOBA, as you may know, represents the owners and managers of more than 161 million square feet of commercial office space across the region. Approximately 68 million square feet of that total portfolio is in Northern Virginia, much of which is located in the city of Alexandria and would therefore be subject to any increased levy on commercial property. As direct stakeholders in the city's decision whether to utilize the newly endowed authority and to what level it is ultimately exercised, our organization urges that great caution be taken to avoid the potentially negative impacts of increasing the commercial property tax rate, particularly beyond a very modest level.

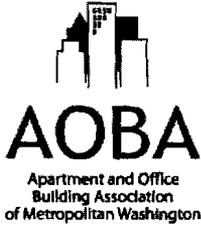
We do not contest staff's assertion of the critical nature of new transportation infrastructure funding. This is, in fact, a position that is shared by AOBA and others in the business community. The state of virtual paralysis on Northern Virginia's roads and rails impacts not only the quality of life for local residents, but also the safety and long-term economic vitality of the region. Virginia's pro-business climate is already being eroded by the inability of businesses to effectively and efficiently move goods, services and people by way of a transportation system in crisis. For AOBA members specifically, it impairs the movement of employees to and from work, drives up the costs of vendor services and ultimately constrains efforts to attract, place and retain tenants in buildings. It was in recognition of this clear and direct impact that AOBA participated as an active member of the business coalition that advocated for the local option taxing authority provided as part of the broad-based package of regional taxes and fees in H.B. 3202. It is important, however, to consider the context under which the business community embraced the commercial property tax - a reality that has been substantially altered by subsequent judicial action and other environmental factors.

The unfortunate action of the Supreme Court stripped away the regional components comprising the bulk of the funding package, leaving the real estate industry holding the bag and local governments with no other meaningful alternatives for financing transportation projects. AOBA and its member companies stepped up to the plate and accepted the additional financial burden that would come with the commercial property tax surcharge in order to alleviate the critical problem of regional transportation congestion. This burden was to be shared, however, by other business sectors. The local option property tax was envisioned as a complementary mechanism to augment the nearly \$300 million in revenues that would be collected annually and allocated to local projects across the region by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority. It was never realistically contemplated, furthermore, that it would be adopted at a rate near that which has been proposed by City staff. Certain assurances to this effect were made during the crafting of the enabling authority during the 2007 General Assembly session. The revenue



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www.aoba-metro.org





targets underlying the legislation serve as further evidence of this, as they were predicated on an increase not to exceed 10 cents.

A sudden jump in the real estate tax rate of 12.5 cents would represent a significant unbudgeted expense for those local businesses and small independent retailers that make up the very fabric of our community and contribute mightily to its charm. It is without exaggeration or hyperbole that I offer the warning that such precipitous and sweeping action could have the unintended effect of threatening their survival in this already economically challenging climate. The petition presented by the Chamber of Commerce and signed by nearly 500 of your business constituents is demonstrative of the sticker shock that can be expected in reaction to such a sharp increase in the cost of doing business in the city.

It is additionally worthwhile to reflect on the observations of the Ad Hoc Transportation Tax Option Study Committee established by the Council in 2008 to examine both the positive and negative impacts of enacting the add-on tax. Many of the business considerations contained in the Committee's March 6, 2008 report still hold valid in 2011. The Committee's report acknowledged the concerns of the business community, citing among other risks the potential for local businesses and retail stores to be forced out of business. Accordingly the Committee recommended an increased rate of no more than 4 cents per \$100 assessed value. Yet while economic conditions have stagnated in the three years hence, the City seems to be looking past the admonitions of its own appointed advisory body in considering a full 12.5 cent increase in the tax rate assessed on commercial properties.

The thousands of businesses - both small and large - which make up the city's commercial tenant base face numerous financial pressures. It is therefore critical that the city not proceed too quickly in raising taxes on that particular constituency. To do so would produce unintended negative consequences that could harm the business climate and diminish the commercial tax base over the long term.

I thank you for your consideration on behalf of the commercial real estate industry and again urge great caution as you weigh this most important decision.

Warmest regards,

Brian M. Gordon
Vice President Government Affairs, Virginia

cc: Alexandria City Council





7
4-16-11

EMBASSY SUITES
HOTELS®

I am Charles Varypapa
a business owner, property
owner and resident of
Alexandria.

I have been living in
Alexandria for 13 years
and ~~to~~ in my 10th year
of doing business here.

I believe that in these
economic times it is
unforgivable for the council
to raise taxes to fund their
uncontrolled spending.

I for one have lowered fees
and not raised them in the
past three years. We have
tightened our belts and
expect those governing us
do the same.



EMBASSY SUITES
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I will unrelentingly
and tirelessly campaign
door to door against the
reelection of particular
Council who ignore the
sensitivity of this issue
and vote ~~to raise~~
IN favor of this ADD-ON
TAX

I ask the Council
to consider what they
will do when there
are no businesses left
to pay these taxes.
and urge them
to reverse their
decision.

7
4-16-11

My name is Tom Osborne. I am a resident of Alexandria, I am a homeowner in Alexandria, I operate a business in Alexandria – Spurgeon-Lewis Antiques – and I own commercial real estate in Alexandria. And although I am a member of the Government Relations Committee of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce and a member of the Alexandria Democratic Committee, I am here today speaking only for myself.

I want to express, in the strongest possible way, my opposition to the proposed commercial add-on tax, and I want to address my comments most particularly to the five Democratic members of this body.

I understand, of course, that taxes are the price we pay for civilization, and I do not want to be lumped in with some of the anti-tax zealots. I would much rather live and work in a wonderful place like Alexandria – and pay the higher taxes it entails – than in some low-tax backwater community.

That said, even in a place like Alexandria, taxes should be levied in an equitable way. “Equitable” can have a variety of meanings in different circumstances. “We’re all in this together, so we should all contribute” is one type of equitable taxation. “This will particularly benefit a particular subset of citizens or businesses, so they should be the ones to pay for it” is another. Even the approach that “those who can afford to pay more should contribute more to the general welfare” has a ring of equitability.

Unfortunately, the proposed commercial add-on real estate tax doesn’t meet any of those standards.

The transportation projects the tax is to pay for are not projects that will disproportionately benefit one subset of residents or businesses – they are about improving transportation in a broad sense. A case could be made, in fact, that they will benefit residents and homeowners more than they will benefit most businesses. I don’t believe that any of the transportation expenditures proposed will bring one additional dollar in income to my business, or improve my property values by one penny. I am willing to pay higher taxes for the “general welfare” – the “we’re all in this together” approach. But only if we truly are all in this together; if we are, we should all be in it together on the paying end. That would mean a 3 or 4 cent increase in all real estate taxes, NOT this unfair proposal which singles out a subset of business properties for a 12-cent tax increase and asks nothing of the rest of the Alexandria community.

As for “ability to pay,” the Council in its deliberations seems to recognize that another tax – the business license tax – is hated by the business community precisely because it is unrelated to whether or not a business is actually profitable, and so you’re proposing some relief from that tax. But you’re proposing to replace it with a tax that has even less to do with ability to pay. At least with the business license tax, when I have a very bad year – as I did in 2006 and 2007, when my sales plunged by more than 50% -- I at least pay lower business license taxes. With the commercial add-on tax, I will see no such tax relief in a bad year.

I suspect that my comments here this morning – and those of other speakers – are pointless; that the members of council have their minds already made up and this hearing is little more than a charade. But on the off chance that it is not – that some of you are still open to reason – I urge you to vote against this proposed tax. Not one of the transportation projects it will pay for is so urgent that it can’t wait until next year, if necessary, so you can come back with a proposal for a general tax rather than a tax that targets struggling small businesses.

The commercial add-on tax, which some members of this council are claiming as “one of the few tools in our arsenal”, is in fact a bad case of pandering to the “something for nothing” mentality: don’t tax the overwhelming majority of voters; instead, try to shift the tax burden to a small subset of citizens, many of whom don’t even live in the city: commercial property owners.

Quite frankly, this approach is not worthy of elected officials of the Democratic party, most of whom I’ve worked over the years to help elect.

7
4-16-11

Jackie Henderson

From: Tina Leone <tleone@alexchamber.com>
Sent: Friday, April 15, 2011 8:04 PM
To: William Euille; Frank Fannon; Kerry Donley; Alicia Hughes; Del Pepper; paulcsmedberg@aol.com; Rose Boyd; Jackie Henderson; Elaine Scott; Rob Krupicka; Linda Owens; Elizabeth Jones
Subject: COA Contact Us: Proposed Commercial Add-on Tax
Attachments: b87b85ab3ae52bf60d549f229c403463.pdf; ATT00001.txt

COA Contact Us: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members

Time: [Fri Apr 15, 2011 20:03:47] Message ID: [29255]

Issue Type: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members
First Name: Tina
Last Name: Leone
Street Address: Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
801 N Fairfax St
City: Alexandria
State: VA
Zip: 22314
Phone: 703-549-1000
Email Address: tleone@alexchamber.com
Subject: Proposed Commercial Add-on Tax
Dear Mayor, Vice-Mayor, and Council Members,

Attached is a memorandum

that details our position on the Add-On-Tax for your review. We be
presenting only an outline of some of these points in our testimony
tomorrow. Thank you for your consideration of the effect of this tax on
Comments: our business community.

Sincerely,

Tina

Leone
President/CEO
Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
Attachment: b87b85ab3ae52bf60d549f229c403463.pdf

Alexandria Chamber of Commerce Memorandum on the Commercial Add-On-Tax

Final Draft, 4/15/11

1. Commercial Add-on-Tax – An issue of Equity

- According to information presented at the Council's Budget Hearing, an equal number of people travel out of the City as travel into the City each day. Improved transportation benefits residents and employers equally.
- The City's stated reasons for taxing to fund additional transportation project are that it will increase connectivity, enable smart growth, protect the City from the impact of inter-jurisdictional traffic, improve the quality of life, and reduce traffic congestion. These are benefits that accrue to all people in the City - not just businesses and commercial property owners.
- Considering the total tax paid by a business over the course of a year, business and commercial property owners contribute more than 50% of the total revenue to the City, while requiring far fewer services than residences. Why should business alone provide even more revenue for services that benefit the entire population?
- Any additional revenue required for transportation-related projects beyond those already funded in the City's Budget should be raised in an equitable manner, consistent with how any other project or need would be funded.

2. Commercial Add-On-Tax – A Burden on Business

- The City has increased the average assessment for commercial property by 4%, with reports of some properties increasing as much as 10% in value. So the tax for commercial property owners will already be higher, even without considering the extra burden of an Add-On-Tax. Adding the proposed 12.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value on top of the increase in assessment means a combined increase, year-over-year, of a minimum of 17% for most commercial properties, and up to 24% for others.
- The largest single property tax increase since 1986, and perhaps in Alexandria's history, was 7.5 cents per \$100. A 12.5 cent per \$100 Add-On-Tax would approach a rate nearly double the highest rate ever enacted by a Council in Alexandria.
- For many commercial properties this tax increase will be passed through to the business tenants of that property. Those businesses ultimately bearing the burden of the additional tax will need to rethink their expenditures for space, salaries, advertising, and charitable contributions.
- Council publicly states it wants to encourage the growth of the commercial sector in Alexandria as a strategy to improve economic sustainability. Yet, the net effect of an Add-On-Tax is just the opposite of an incentive for businesses, essentially removing

\$12.5 million annually from the business community. For the 10 year budget cycle now under consideration, the amount of capital removed from the business community will total \$125 million in today's dollars, not counting the amounts paid as a result of annual increases in assessment and statutory increases in maximum taxing authority.

- Currently the tax revenue provided by Office, Retail and Hotel properties far exceeds the cost of City services to support them, while the majority of tax revenue from residential uses is consumed for residential related City services. The proposed Add-On-Tax liability will only increase this discrepancy. The Chamber is not averse to the generation of revenue from increased commercial uses through new and denser commercial development; however, growing commercial revenue through increasing tax rates is counter-productive to increasing commercial growth.
- The Economic Sustainability Study clearly concluded that commercial property and the business tax base must be expanded in order to support the cost of the City's services. It delineated the danger of continued overdevelopment of residential uses. Yet this year we learn that residential construction has far outstripped commercial construction, and we note with regret that Alexandria has not been able to attract the large commercial tenants we so desperately need for our economic survival. This combined with loss of current tenants to other jurisdictions and the financial frailty of local businesses detours Alexandria from the path to economic sustainability. The Add-On-Tax exacerbates these recent trends and counters the primary message of the Sustainability Study.
- The State's enabling legislation has a provision that permits the City Council to further increase the Add-On-Tax to 25 cents per \$100 in 2013. This is just two years away. Council has made no statement or commitment regarding this potential additional tax increase. What will prevent Council from increasing the Add-On-Tax in 2013?

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- Arlington and Fairfax implemented this Tax, but the comparison to Alexandria is flawed in many fundamental ways.
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initiatives to maximize the Metro expansion, and it should be clear the magnitude of their transportation needs far overshadows that of Alexandria.

- In Fairfax and Arlington a large percentage of the commercial property is owned by absentee owners. Further, a large percentage of the commercial property is occupied by national or regional tenants. A tax pass-through is more easily absorbed by absentee owners and large, national or regional tenants. Additionally, businesses in our neighboring counties have a vested interest in attracting employees that live in a suburban context, and this greatly influences their decision to absorb additional tax that can improve roads, improve commutes to Washington, DC, and attract employees. Alexandria is not compelled in a similar manner.
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- The transportation needs for the City should be given a fresh look using current data and a forward –looking perspective. Examining the list of proposed projects in the proposed Budget as well as the proposed list for funding under the Add-On-Tax, we find projects that are neither critical nor able to contribute to the economic health and growth of the City’s tax base. Projects such as the extension of the Eisenhower Metro platform, the tunnel between the Train and Metro stations, improvements to bicycle paths, pedestrian paths, and expensive improvements to intersections are not consistent the City’s objective of “doing more with less.”
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- No compelling argument has been presented applying rigorous analysis and data for adopting any specific rate for an Add-On-Tax based on the proposed list of projects and a timeline for their implementation. Is it a coincidence that the rate proposed is the maximum amount enabled by State Law?

5. Options

- This is not a choice between enacting the full 12.5 cents outright or “being left behind” adjacent counties, as has been suggested. There may be need-based transportation projects that can be funded without placing the entire burden on the commercial property owners and the business sector. Further, after a more detailed and thoughtful analysis of real need, we believe the amount of additional funding will be substantially less than the proposed 12.5 cents per \$100. Once a reasonable funding level is identified, then raising the necessary funds should be done fairly and equitably. Council has the tools to determine a reasonable funding level for demonstrated transportation needs and to craft an equitable funding solution that does not burden the business community.

6. Summary and Appeal to the City Council

- The businesses represented by the Chamber largely comprise residents of the City who own businesses and work in businesses in Alexandria, many of whom also own commercial property.

- They recognize the need for a rational, appropriate transportation policy that reasonably supports the needs of the region, but also one that carefully considers the unique context of Alexandria City. Modes of transportation that are appropriate for our neighbors are not necessarily appropriate or cost beneficial for Alexandria.
- They ask that all of the City's transportation projects be evaluated using a forward-looking perspective supported by data and demonstrating efficacy, return on investment, and measurable relief for the citizens of the City. Also, expensive road and intersection improvements that encourage an increase in cross-City traffic or that do not benefit its citizens should be avoided, and are not supported by the City's broad planning objectives of creating self-sustaining centers with employment, entertainment, living and shopping opportunities that do not rely on expensive and elaborate transportation systems.
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- And finally, they ask Council to foresee the danger of a future Add-On-Tax increase in 2013, and prepare a 10 year Budget that precludes such an increase.

7
4-16-11

Alexandria Chamber of Commerce Memorandum on the Commercial Add-On-Tax

Final Draft, 4/15/11

1. Commercial Add-on-Tax – An issue of Equity

- According to information presented at the Council's Budget Hearing, an equal number of people travel out of the City as travel into the City each day. Improved transportation benefits residents and employers equally.
- The City's stated reasons for taxing to fund additional transportation project are that it will increase connectivity, enable smart growth, protect the City from the impact of inter-jurisdictional traffic, improve the quality of life, and reduce traffic congestion. These are benefits that accrue to all people in the City - not just businesses and commercial property owners.
- Considering the total tax paid by a business over the course of a year, business and commercial property owners contribute more than 50% of the total revenue to the City, while requiring far fewer services than residences. Why should business alone provide even more revenue for services that benefit the entire population?
- Any additional revenue required for transportation-related projects beyond those already funded in the City's Budget should be raised in an equitable manner, consistent with how any other project or need would be funded.

2. Commercial Add-On-Tax – A Burden on Business

- The City has increased the average assessment for commercial property by 4%, with reports of some properties increasing as much as 10% in value. So the tax for commercial property owners will already be higher, even without considering the extra burden of an Add-On-Tax. Adding the proposed 12.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value on top of the increase in assessment means a combined increase, year-over-year, of a minimum of 17% for most commercial properties, and up to 24% for others.
- The largest single property tax increase since 1986, and perhaps in Alexandria's history, was 7.5 cents per \$100. A 12.5 cent per \$100 Add-On-Tax would approach a rate nearly double the highest rate ever enacted by a Council in Alexandria.
- For many commercial properties this tax increase will be passed through to the business tenants of that property. Those businesses ultimately bearing the burden of the additional tax will need to rethink their expenditures for space, salaries, advertising, and charitable contributions.
- Council publicly states it wants to encourage the growth of the commercial sector in Alexandria as a strategy to improve economic sustainability. Yet, the net effect of an Add-On-Tax is just the opposite of an incentive for businesses, essentially removing

\$12.5 million annually from the business community. For the 10 year budget cycle now under consideration, the amount of capital removed from the business community will total \$125 million in today's dollars, not counting the amounts paid as a result of annual increases in assessment and statutory increases in maximum taxing authority.

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Oppose the Commercial Add-on Tax

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THE PETITION

Dear Mayor, Vice-Mayor and Council Members,

We urge you to protect our businesses and promote economic growth by rejecting any increase in the commercial property tax.

This tax is not right for our City, it is inequitable and the City has other ways available to fund transportation projects.

We believe this tax is not right for Alexandria. We are different than our neighbors, Arlington and Fairfax County. Our neighbors have many large, national and international corporations to help shoulder the burden of transportation costs. Our business tax base is predominantly comprised of small, locally owned and operated businesses that subsist on narrow profit margins. To expect small business owners to bear tax burdens in a manner similar to the way our neighbors tax their businesses is unrealistic. It is also potentially crippling to the businesses that foster the unique charm we have in Alexandria which is craved by residents and promoted by the City.

We ask you to consider seizing the opportunity to market our City as a tax haven for businesses and a more attractive option to locate a business as compared to our neighbors.

We believe this tax is inequitable. We support transportation improvements and we are willing to pay our fair share. However, funding these needs cannot be borne solely by the business community. Residents and businesses alike will benefit from transportation improvements, and thus, the funding of such improvements should result from a uniform tax rate.

We believe this tax is not the only tool available to the City to fund transportation improvements. A commercial add-on tax cannot be supported by Alexandria's small business base. A dedicated allocation of general revenue funding may be established for transportation infrastructure improvements. You also have the ability to issue general obligation bonds to fund transportation improvement projects.

We ask you to consider these points carefully and protect our businesses by refusing to impose the commercial add-on tax.

SIGN PETITION

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Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
 801 N Fairfax St
 Alexandria, VA 22314
 703-549-1000

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Name: Alexandria Chamber Of Commerce on Feb 10, 2011
Comments: We represent over 860 businesses in Alexandria.

Name: Bud Miller, CPP on Feb 10, 2011 2
Comments: Mr. Mayor, City Council Members: Please listen to the voices of Alexandrians, not outside lobbyists and professional politicians, and vote against this unfair tax as you have so many times in the past.

Name: Chris Marston on Feb 10, 2011 3
Comments: Just because you can tax someone, doesn't mean you should. The growth in the cost of city government has greatly outstripped inflation, cost of living, and most other indicators.

Name: Laurie Wirth on Feb 10, 2011 4
Comments:

Name: Dora Adamopoulos on Feb 11, 2011 5
Comments: Even though I currently rent retail property, this proposed increase will have a tremendous impact to my small business in being able to maintain affordable rental values in the future. I feel it is unfair to solely tax the businesses for an outcome that is to effect all residents. Either tax everyone equally, or don't tax at all. Increased taxes will force the struggling small business community to relocate to other areas that are more supportive of businesses and will lead to even more expensive, empty, retail slots city-wide. Sincerely, Dora Adamopoulos, OD eye2eye Optometry Corner

Name: Mary Longacre on Feb 11, 2011 6
Comments:

Name: Theresa Del Ninno on Feb 11, 2011 7
Comments: I fully support developing our transportation system but not at the cost of stunting business growth by increasing taxes for property owners.

Name: Laura Lee, General Manager Hawthorn Suites on Feb 11, 2011 8
Comments: Dear Mayor, I must participate in this petition because we are already taxed to death and on top of being taxed to death all city utilities have increased by proportionate measures costing me far more than I can afford in this economy. To top it all off, my payroll tax, unemployment tax (even though I haven't laid a single associate off as long as I've been here (4yrs)) property taxes have also all gone up. I find it unreasonable to expect our businesses to absorb the cost of special projects and other new items added to the "City" budget. Please consider this when voting. Respectfully, Laura Lee General Manager

Name: H. (Skip) Maginniss on Feb 11, 2011 9
Comments: Transportation improvements benefit the entire City and should be funded by the entire population, not by one constituency.

Name: Anthony J. Scovazzo on Feb 11, 2011 10
Comments: I have recently relocated my office within the city and added three new employees. All of us are supporting local business. The gross receipt tax for my business is already larger in Alexandria than Fairfax County. Adding the new tax will make it more difficult to attract and keep business with the city. Tony Scovazzo

Name: Melinda Sigal on Feb 11, 2011 11
Comments:

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- Name:** Carl Glad on Feb 11, 2011 **12**
Comments: Small businesses in Old Towne open and close regularly. The heart of Old Towne, King Street, already has empty commerical property on nearly every block. Additional taxes will burden small businesses in an already trying economic time. Alexandria should encourage small business ownership. We are Virginians, let Maryland tax itself to death.
- Name:** Sydney Olson on Feb 11, 2011 **13**
Comments:
- Name:** Leslie Bauman on Feb 11, 2011 **14**
Comments: Thank you for your consideration of this petition!
- Name:** Rick Endres on Feb 11, 2011 **15**
Comments: Amen.
- Name:** Christine Sennott on Feb 11, 2011 **16**
Comments:
- Name:** Andrew F Palmieri on Feb 11, 2011 **17**
Comments: It is disappointing to see the City Manager resorting to an anti-business solution to the City's transportation needs. The Chamber routinely works with the City to improve its reputation as a place to do business, and this budget recommendation for a full rate commercial add-on tax is a step in the wrong direction for our City government. I hope that the Council recognizes that taking the easy route of over-taxing commercial property owners (and as a result, their business tenants) will only hurt Alexandria's economy. Moreover, while the City hopes to fund transportation improvements at the expense of Alexandria's businesses, these improvements must be maintained and operated, which will be general fund expenses in the future. Tax hikes are coming for everyone unless we dramatically build the commercial tax base in the City. As our economy hopefully emerges from a recession, the City now asks those businesses that have managed to survive difficult times to face new economic challenges. There are other choices: general revenue bonds, and allocation of general fund dollars in conjunction with increasing efficiencies in City Government, to name a few. Some might even suggest an across-the-board tax increase, which I do not favor. Nearly all would agree that the City needs transportation infrastructure improvements. These improvements will benefit residents and businesses alike. Funding the construction and maintenance of these improvements is a core governmental function. I ask that our Council make some tough decisions about an equitable means of accomplishing this task and reject the City Manager's easy solution at the expense of Alexandria's business community.
- Name:** David A Glazier on Feb 11, 2011 **18**
Comments:
- Name:** Thomas Welsh on Feb 11, 2011 **19**
Comments:
- Name:** Kimberly Korbelt on Feb 11, 2011 **20**
Comments: As a small business owner, we've been holding on through the recession, but there's not much left to cut. A tax increase at this time would be devastating.
- Name:** Nancy J. Appleby, Appleby Law PLLC on Feb 11, 2011 **21**
Comments:
- Name:** Jody Manor on Feb 11, 2011 **22**
Comments: We're really just starting to recover. Please don't squeeze small business owners to pay for transportation projects.
- Name:** Anila Angjeli on Feb 11, 2011 **23**
Comments:
- Name:** Dayna Blumel on Feb 11, 2011 **24**
Comments:
- Name:** Marcia Miller on Feb 11, 2011 **25**
Comments: This new tax will cost jobs, kill businesses and increase prices in Alexandria. Why is City Council doing everything they can to move our businesses to National Harbor?
- Name:** Saly Scime on Feb 11, 2011 **26**

Comments: As a citizen and small business owner, I firmly believe that this tax will create an unreasonable and unsustainable burden on the small businesses in Alexandria, many of whom continue to struggle in an already difficult economy.

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Name: Matt Whitaker on Feb 11, 2011
Comments:

27

Name: Raighne Delaney on Feb 11, 2011

28

Comments: I don't see any justification for differentiation of commercial and residential property taxes. Raise them together if need be, lower them together when possible, but keep them together.

Name: Rusty Dalal on Feb 11, 2011
Comments:

29

Name: Jennifer Coffey on Feb 11, 2011
Comments:

30

Name: John Altman on Feb 12, 2011
Comments:

31

Name: Tom Osborne on Feb 12, 2011

32

Comments: Either we're all in this together, or we're not. If the former, then a uniform tax increase on all property would be an appropriate solution. If the latter, then only those who stand to benefit directly from each project should be expected to pay higher taxes to support it. I see no justification that an Old Town business like mine should be singled out to pay a higher tax rate than my residential neighbors for a traffic improvement around BRAC (for example) that will have no direct benefit for me or my business.

Name: J. Bradford Altman on Feb 12, 2011
Comments:

33

Name: Cindy Mccartney on Feb 13, 2011
Comments:

34

Name: Tom Lally on Feb 13, 2011

35

Comments: To tax commercial real estate is to tax small mom and pop business in the city. Landlords pass all increases on to us. Tom Lally Alexandria Pastry Shop and Cafe

Name: Lawrence Singer on Feb 13, 2011

36

Comments: Small businesses have difficulties with high rents competitive disadvantage compared to larger companies that have economies of scale and high real estate costs. Additionally, we have high taxes already. This would put us in an even more perilous position. Small businesses such as mine would have to combine with other in larger to achieve economies of scale and ultimately government would receive less revenue. In the short term, I can afford to employ fewer people and pay less. Taxing business is not the way out of government overspending.

Name: Brian Kimmel on Feb 14, 2011

37

Comments: In a time where everyone is being hurt by an apathetic economy, the city won't thrive by placing an unfair burden on the businesses that so enthusiastically support it. But rather, it will drive business out, away from Alexandria, no different than other tax discrepancies drive both businesses and consumers to adjacent jurisdiction. This move will not produce the desired result, but rather will reduce the base from which the city draws its income. Not a wise move.

Name: John Whalen on Feb 14, 2011

38

Comments: As a commercial real estate owner in Alexandria, I must say that not only is Alexandria an impossible city in which to do business, with incredible beauracratc hoops to jump through to do anything in Real Estate, NOW you want us to pay more for this aggravation. If you stop spending money on foolish programs, maybe you'd have some left to run the city efficiently.

Name: Mike Anderson on Feb 14, 2011
Comments:

39

Name: Bill Blackburn on Feb 14, 2011
Comments:

40

Name: Donna Anderson on Feb 14, 2011
Comments:

41

Name: Philip D. Weber, Director Of Property Management - LCOR on Feb 14, 2011 **42**
Comments: Year 2006, Rate was 81.5/\$100 Year 2007, Rate was 83.0/\$100 (1.84% increase) Year 2008, Rate was 84.5/\$100 (1.81% increase) Year 2009, Rate was 90.3/\$100 (6.86% increase) Year 2010, Rate was 97.8/\$100 (8.31% increase) Year 2011, Rate will be 110.3(?)/\$100 (12.78% inc.) Total increase is 35.34% in rate alone over 5 years!!

Name: Lillian Chao-Quinlan on Feb 14, 2011 **43**
Comments:

Name: Mary Maginniss on Feb 14, 2011 **44**
Comments: Cost sharing would be more equitable, as residents, workers, and tourists all benefit from improved transportation.

Name: Caren Camp on Feb 14, 2011 **45**
Comments: Please do not raise the taxes!

Name: Joseph F. Collum on Feb 14, 2011 **46**
Comments: As an owner of a small residential rental property zoned CL, this will create a bigger challenge to break even on rents that are already at the top of what is possible. Please consider all options before enacting this measure.

Name: *Anonymous* on Feb 15, 2011 **47**
Comments:

Name: Charlie Banta on Feb 15, 2011 **48**
Comments:

Name: Sharon Eddy on Feb 15, 2011 **49**
Comments: I use many more services as a resident of Alexandria than my business does and the tax is overly burdensome.

Name: Shelli Vasser Gilliam on Feb 15, 2011 **50**
Comments:

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- Name:** *Anonymous* on Feb 16, 2011 51
Comments: This is a ludicrous add-on tax that will break the backs of businesses in the city. Why don't you just cut costs across the board to rein in the short-fall. There is so much fluff in the system that we would all benefit by MUCH LESS waste.
- Name:** Christopher M. Bates on Feb 16, 2011 52
Comments: We strongly agree that small businesses in Alexandria should not be expected to bear this proposed additional local tax burden. Alexandria is different than its surrounding county neighbors in terms of the make-up of its business community, and we urge our elected officials to take the Chamber's advice as outlined in this letter/petition.
- Name:** Kyle Olson on Feb 16, 2011 53
Comments:
- Name:** JOHN J. RENNER II on Feb 16, 2011 54
Comments:
- Name:** Deborah George on Feb 16, 2011 55
Comments: I've owned a staffing firm in Alexandria for 23 years. I feel I pay more than my share of personal property and revenue taxes - almost to the point of having to relocate during these tough times. I do not want to have a commercial real estate tax passed on to me from my landlord. This is a ridiculous tax in an already very tough job market/business climate. I'm doing all I can to survive. I've tried in vain to get some of City of Alexandria's staffing business - but it is always awarded to national firms? After hundreds of thousands of dollars invested here in Alexandria City, why am I not being used as a valuable staffing resource? Why is the city not reinvesting in the local community? I would love an answer to this question. Twenty three years this year! Debbie George President Curzon Staffing, Inc. 703-836-4403
- Name:** Diana Simonton on Feb 16, 2011 56
Comments: Small businesses are the lifeblood of Alexandria. Please reconsider this 12.5% tax increase.
- Name:** Sandra Levy, Alexandria Myotherapy, Inc. on Feb 16, 2011 57
Comments: I am the co-owner of Alexandria Myotherapy, Inc., a small massage practice with eight employees. Please know that aside from being an unfair burden on business, this add-on tax will be a hardship that comes at a time when we are already stretched.
- Name:** Cathy And Jay Thomas, Owners Alphagraphics on Feb 16, 2011 58
Comments:
- Name:** Edward D. Hubacher on Feb 16, 2011 59
Comments: If you continue with your tax and spend habits you will find that small businesses cannot afford to be located in the City of Alexandria. There's a reason we have so many ice cream stores on lower King Street. Shortly everyone will find it necessary to relocate to National Harbor.
- Name:** Judy Mangum on Feb 16, 2011 60
Comments: Director of Finance & Administration American College of Osteopathic Surgeons 123 N. Henry St.
- Name:** Dennis Goris on Feb 16, 2011 61
Comments:

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Conservatives Are Rising!
[www.AskHeritage.org/...](http://www.AskHeritage.org/)

- Name:** Mark S. Allen on Feb 16, 2011 **62**
Comments: This tax has no logical connection to its alleged goal. If transportation infrastructure is needed, then everyone should be taxed, not just the select few whose properties actually generate revenue for the City and don't require such things as schools. This is outrageous.
- Name:** CATHERINE VIERNES on Feb 16, 2011 **63**
Comments:
- Name:** Rebecca Lasky on Feb 16, 2011 **64**
Comments:
- Name:** Peter Moran CEO Society Of American Florist on Feb 16, 2011 **65**
Comments: With over 400 non- profit associations based in Alexandria almost none of us need to make our headquarters here as it is a very expensive area to to base operations. The add on tax to just the business community is not a reasonable approach .
- Name:** Anita Peine on Feb 16, 2011 **66**
Comments: This would be a major imposition on the business community in Alexandria, possibly one that would make think twice about being in Alexandria instead of Fairfax County.
- Name:** Audrey Boobar on Feb 16, 2011 **67**
Comments:
- Name:** OLDE TOWNE GEMSTONES on Feb 16, 2011 **68**
Comments:
- Name:** Anna Fitzgerald on Feb 16, 2011 **69**
Comments:
- Name:** *Anonymous* on Feb 16, 2011 **70**
Comments:
- Name:** Genie Ko on Feb 16, 2011 **71**
Comments:
- Name:** *Anonymous* on Feb 16, 2011 **72**
Comments:
- Name:** Gregory L. Kunding - HomeFirst Mortgage Corp. on Feb 16, 2011 **73**
Comments: The time has come for our politicians to consider options that are not anathema to those of us who have made a conscious decision to locate our businesses in the City. Many of us are already struggling in this business environment. Instead of making hard decisions about spending priorities, political leaders seek to punish the most productive among us. Remember, our businesses already pay taxes, hire employees who patronize local entrepreneurs and provide the glue that allows this City to retain its vitality. Higher taxes mean that we have to consider cuts of our own, even as we have already made the hard decisions implicit in running a business. It's time for the City to find a way to provide basic city services while living within their budget. To do less is to pass the poor decisions of our City leaders on to a community that is already pulling its share of the load.
- Name:** Kevin R. Brockway on Feb 16, 2011 **74**
Comments: While i agree transportation and roads need improvement the commercial entities should not bear the burden solely.
- Name:** Kathie Little on Feb 16, 2011 **75**
Comments: spread the cost to all not just businesses.
- Name:** Bob Kuletz on Feb 16, 2011 **76**
Comments:
- Name:** Eisenhower Mill Properties, LLC on Feb 16, 2011 **77**
Comments:
- Name:** Eisenhower Center Office Building (2121 Eisenhower Ave) on Feb 16, 2011 **78**
Comments:

Name: 2111 Eisenhower Avenue, LP on Feb 16, 2011
Comments:

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Name: Wellington Watts on Feb 16, 2011
Comments:

81

Name: Stephen Tarbuck on Feb 16, 2011
Comments:

Name: Sally Vaquero on Feb 16, 2011
Comments:

82

Name: Dennis Greene on Feb 16, 2011
Comments:

83

Name: Gregory Llinas on Feb 16, 2011

84

Comments: I also believe that the City of Alexandria should analyze better how to support the business community as a way to improve the business climate, environment and ability for more busienss to relocate to this area rather than increasing the burden of existing business.

Name: Michael Leonard on Feb 16, 2011

85

Comments: It does not seem fair to place the entire burden of funding new construction entirely on the business community when the general public will benefit from transportation infrastructure improvements as well. Taxing business may be politically expedient, but it does not allow for the entire sum to be raised and is unjust.

Name: Anysia Oswald & Thomas Singer on Feb 16, 2011

86

Comments: Increasingly, it feels like the City of Alexandria takes its independent businesses for granted in many ways, and seems not to understand how very difficult it is to survive as a small business This is just one more example.

Name: Thor Lynch on Feb 16, 2011

87

Comments: Please consider alternatives the proposed commercial property tax increase. Our small business owners cannot afford addition tax burdens placed on them at this time in our economic recovery. Furthermore, our commercial property owners have worked exhaustively with their tenants throughout the past two years of this economic downturn to keep their buildings and offices leased, often making concessions and compromises to prevent their tenants from leaving and moving their businesses elsewhere. What good are improved roads and transportation systems, like a new metro stop at Potomac Yards, if there are significantly fewer businesses and retail shops for consumers and citizens to frequent? This is a slippery slope we are about to start down and there is a very real possibility that this will push small business owners away from doing business in Alexandria and will have a severely negative impact on our competitiveness and ability to attract and maintain a strong small business community so essential to the economic engine of this great city. Please listen to our concerns and trust the voice of your citizens whose lives depend on and this community.

Name: Camille Leverett on Feb 16, 2011
Comments:

88

Name: Rebecca Fertig on Feb 16, 2011
Comments:

89

Name: Ashley McNeff on Feb 16, 2011
Comments:

90

Name: Institute For The Advancement Of Service on Feb 16, 2011

91

Comments: We are a small nonprofit service organization, located in Alexandria since 1994. Last year our total income was \$107,412. In 2010, 13% of our budget went for real estate taxes. Adding the 12.5 cent add on tax would present significant hardship on our ability to sustain our community services, much of which are at an affordable cost to the citizens of Alexandria during this time of economic challenge.

Name: Jill Erber on Feb 16, 2011
Comments:

92

Name: William Dougherty on Feb 16, 2011
Comments:

93

Name: Domar Properties, LLC on Feb 16, 2011 Comments:	94
Name: 700 N Fairfax St, LP on Feb 16, 2011 Comments:	95
Name: Bankers Square Associates on Feb 16, 2011 Comments:	96
Name: Linda J. Kelsey on Feb 16, 2011 Comments:	97
Name: Bruce Machanic on Feb 16, 2011 Comments: Why are you just targeting the businesses. I don't mind paying a bit more for transporation issues if they are truly necessary, but residents use our roads just as much as business does so the tax should be levied on all, not just us.	98
Name: Strand on Feb 16, 2011 Comments:	99
Name: Wheeler Center And Associates on Feb 16, 2011 Comments:	100

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Name: Simpson Company on Feb 16, 2011 Comments:	101
Name: Mary Polsley Williams on Feb 16, 2011 Comments:	102
Name: Allen J. McBride on Feb 16, 2011 Comments:	103
Name: Chris Darling on Feb 16, 2011 Comments:	104
Name: Thomas J. Russo on Feb 16, 2011 Comments:	105
Name: Susan Scheffler on Feb 17, 2011 Comments:	106
Name: Warren L. Almquist, AIA Architect on Feb 17, 2011 Comments:	107
Name: Sheri Bergen on Feb 17, 2011 Comments: This tax on transportation improvements will directly affect my income NEGATIVELY. I believe everyone, not just businesses should be responsible for these improvements. It is anti-business and anti-jobs to foist this on the many small businesses and employees (if indirectly) in Alexandria.	108
Name: <i>Anonymous</i> on Feb 17, 2011 Comments:	109
Name: Amelia R. Bennett on Feb 17, 2011 Comments: If you raise the taxes on buildings, my rent will increase. I have a very small business that is difficult to sustain in the current economy, anyway, and I don't need the additional expense or my rent increasing. Thank you	110
Name: Charles K. Collum, Jr. on Feb 17, 2011 Comments:	111
Name: Clark Bavin on Feb 17, 2011 Comments: As a small business owner in the City, I strongly support this petition! Putting additional taxes on property owners trickles down to tenants who then cannot pass them on to their customers very easily. Increasing our cost of doing business doesn't make us competitive. Singling out businesses from residents is also not fair because they use the roads just as much as I do, if not more. And you're already taking away from people wanting to come to do business by putting in additional parking meters in traditional 2hr zones - very sneaky and greedy I might add. And I think it's naive on Council's part to think that Small Businesses have huge pots of money to fork over to the City. Afterall we're called small businesses for a reason. You're already double taxing us by basing business licensing fees with Sales Tax included in the Gross Income line. Then, you're hitting us with Personal Property Tax on everything right down to our paperclips. I dare say this new tax will more than likely put a few more businesse, out of business. And then, what - you'll wind up with nothing.	112

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Does that seem very smart? Why not reduce City Salaries or make departmental cuts? I don't see enough sacrificing being done on your side of things. It seems every time there's an issue, someone proposes we need "another tax". The truth is transportation is not a new issue. We've always had the need for transportation, going back to the city's founding. So, let's not pretend it's a new problem. It's part of our City and it's always evolving. Therefore, you need to better plan and you need to figure out how to make it work with what you've got to work with. It's called staying within your budget. Don't just increase the budget and then expect to add another tax to make up the difference.

Name: Alex McGuinness on Feb 17, 2011 **113**
Comments:

Name: Maureen Schantz on Feb 17, 2011 **114**
Comments: No more taxes!! How about cutting spending for a change? Maureen Schantz

Name: Kenneth R Schantz on Feb 17, 2011 **115**
Comments:

Name: Nancy Belmont on Feb 18, 2011 **116**
Comments: Resident and business owner!

Name: Susan Elbertson on Feb 18, 2011 **117**
Comments:

Name: Dina Clevenson Katz on Feb 18, 2011 **118**
Comments: Let's look for a more equitable solution please. This is too harsh for the small business, on top of the property and business license taxes.

Name: Frank Flaherty on Feb 18, 2011 **119**
Comments:

Name: Jeffrey A. Tasey on Feb 18, 2011 **120**
Comments:

Name: John Stephenson on Feb 18, 2011 **121**
Comments: Small businesses are the life-blood of Alexandria. By taxing small businesses as the economy is starting to recover, you run the risk of doing serious harm to small businesses who are struggling to pay bills and avoid layoffs. There are other ways to improve transportation. But this harmful tax is not one of them.

Name: *Anonymous* on Feb 18, 2011 **122**
Comments:

Name: David Rudy on Feb 18, 2011 **123**
Comments:

Name: Chuck Martin on Feb 18, 2011 **124**
Comments: No added anti-business taxes in Alexandria!

Name: John McManus on Feb 18, 2011 **125**
Comments:

Name: Robert Hannigan on Feb 18, 2011 **126**
Comments: As someone who both works and lives in Alexandria, I agree with the assessment that our transportation infrastructure is inadequate. That said, this is a problem that affects both residents and businesses and to unfairly burden businesses with the add on tax will negatively impact the businesses in our community that provide the lion's share of taxes for Alexandria. I urge that you consider alternatives to the idea of having one group pay for something that affects everyone.

Name: Lonnie C. Rich on Feb 18, 2011 **127**
Comments: I support a uniform tax rate as the best way to govern. This really hurts small businesses most of whom have leases with tax pass through provisions.

Name: *Anonymous* on Feb 18, 2011 **128**
Comments:

Name: Jay Atkinson on Feb 18, 2011 **129**

Comments:**Name:** Michele Ward on Feb 18, 2011**Comments:** This increase will be devastating to small business like mine!

130

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Name: Jennifer Bodie on Feb 18, 2011**Comments:**

131

Name: Nancy W. Macklin on Feb 18, 2011**Comments:**

132

Name: Mary White on Feb 18, 2011**Comments:**

133

Name: RC Fields on Feb 18, 2011**Comments:**

134

Name: Demian Brady on Feb 18, 2011**Comments:**

135

Name: Rob Kaufman on Feb 18, 2011**Comments:** I am concerned this will be economic suicide for most small businesses that will be affected. The second important impact is that it will lower the NOI on the commercial buildings which will lower their value and therefore their assessment.

136

Name: *Anonymous* on Feb 18, 2011**Comments:** Please stop taxing us! Sincerely, Ben Lievestro

137

Name: Robert L Bell, SVP Armed Forced Benefit Association on Feb 18, 2011**Comments:**

138

Name: Thomas S Patti on Feb 18, 2011**Comments:** Reject any increase in commercial property tax. Any increased taxes will prolong the economic recovery.

139

Name: *Anonymous* on Feb 18, 2011**Comments:**

140

Name: Patrick Murray on Feb 19, 2011**Comments:** Raising taxes is the wrong answer for Alexandria's business owners and citizens. There problem is one of excess spending, not a lack of revenue. We cannot tax ourselves to prosperity.

141

Name: Joseph Hadeed on Feb 19, 2011**Comments:**

142

Name: Brianna Cardiff on Feb 19, 2011**Comments:**

143

Name: Ira Peine on Feb 19, 2011**Comments:** It is important that the city of Alexandria support the local businesses and provide a financially secure environment for their growth and well being.

144

Name: A J Kearney on Feb 19, 2011**Comments:** I think we should first justify each project and then find funding for them based on the justification. Building a fund from new taxes is an invitation for wasteful spending.

145

Name: Ruth Duty on Feb 19, 2011**Comments:** Please! Thank You!

146

Name: Andrew Orenge on Feb 19, 2011**Comments:**

147

Name: Linda Hubbard on Feb 19, 2011

148

Comments:

Name: Linda Lloyd on Feb 19, 2011

149

Comments: The commercial property tax that is already imposed is burdensome as it is. I am definitely opposed to this tax proposal. I would consider moving outside of the Alexandria City limits in order to lower my tax burden.

Name: Dr Roy Heron on Feb 19, 2011

150

Comments: I am oppose of this commercial add on tax

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Name: Pamela Prevar on Feb 19, 2011 **151**
Comments: Small business in Alexandria cannot survive if the taxes increase.

Name: Danielle Romanetti on Feb 19, 2011 **152**
Comments:

Name: Dominic Latella on Feb 19, 2011 **153**
Comments:

Name: Valerie R Ianieri on Feb 19, 2011 **154**
Comments:

Name: Dennis Belmont on Feb 19, 2011 **155**
Comments: I am truly appalled - this tax goes directly against the council's pledge to make Alexandria more friendly to small businesses.

Name: Howard Thomas Hay on Feb 20, 2011 **156**
Comments:

Name: Jeffrey Cukr on Feb 20, 2011 **157**
Comments: anyone with a master's degree in public administration or who has taken a basic public financing course would make a more appropriate recommendation in such a case: capital improvements should be funded with municipal bonds. i am proud to be a citizen of the City of Alexandria and especially proud of our top bond ratings from Moody and S&P. however, these ratings are moot if we do not appropriately use them as a tool to fund our public needs. revenues from taxes should be used to fund current operating expenses, while capital improvements (new schools, new libraries, new rec centers, new roads, etc) should be funded via municipal bonds. the City administration pats itself on the back for having top bond ratings, yet has not used it for years. rather it has used property and sales taxes to fund all of our budgetary needs. this does not make any sense from a public, personal, or investment financing perspective. furthermore, i already find the burden on business in the City of Alexandria to be overly onerous. i personally know firsthand of several businesses that either did not choose to come to our City or prematurely left due to these policies. anyone who sees prime commercial properties sit empty and unused for extended periods of time (for example, at the intersection of King and Union Streets) will wonder why this is so. Alexandria already has special taxes on restaurants and theatres; continuing to add to these business burdens will only drive more of them out and in the long run reduce our revenues. if the City insists on targeting taxes levied on specific groups, then it should at least target them at those who use and benefit from the intended use of the additional taxes, although in this case that too might "drive" people out of Alexandria (no pun intended) to purchase gasoline elsewhere, since the targeted tax would most likely be an increase on gasoline. in summary, i would like the City of Alexandria to finally start putting its good bond ratings to work and start issuing municipal bonds to pay for capital improvements, as would be recommended by anyone with a basic finance course on their resume. thank you.

Name: Melissa Viscovich on Feb 20, 2011 **158**
Comments:

Name: Luana Bossolo on Feb 21, 2011 **159**
Comments: As a long time Alexandria resident, I support small businesses and believe that is what makes Alexandria special and unique. It's also a reason why I live in Alexandria. Small businesses help Alexandria maintain it's historical ambiance, unlike large commercial retale chains. Keep the business tax low so small businesses can thrive in Alexandria.

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- Name:** Michelle B. Bourma on Feb 21, 2011 **160**
Comments: Please leave the businesses in the City of Alexandria alone, we have a hard enough time making it and a tax increase could close a lot of small businesses that are needed by the City of Alexandria.
- Name:** Celia Booth on Feb 21, 2011 **161**
Comments: My husband and I run a small business in Alexandria that employs 15 people. This usurious tax will negatively impact our ability to operate our business.
- Name:** *Anonymous* on Feb 21, 2011 **162**
Comments:
- Name:** Michael MacNair on Feb 21, 2011 **163**
Comments:
- Name:** Rita Offer, CMT on Feb 21, 2011 **164**
Comments: Employee at Alexandira Myotherapy
- Name:** Lisa Balzereit on Feb 22, 2011 **165**
Comments: I have worked and lived in Alexandria for over 20 years. My business has been located in Alexandria for the last 10 years. I do not benefit, in my business, from my location but enjoyed the idea of working and living in the same community. For that matter my business would be easier if I worked closer to my client in DC. In addition, I as a resident do not mind paying for enhanced transportation but as a business I truly oppose this action. We need to encourage small unique business to operate and thrive in our communities. These entities are the ones that provide character and community to our neighborhoods. If we keep this tactic we will all look like Old town and Potomac Yard, chain stores and mass marketing restaurants.
- Name:** William A. Moncure Jr. on Feb 22, 2011 **166**
Comments: We need to encourage small business, the true growth of the future vs large conglomerate for the whole of Alexandria. Small is more / diverse business is more for all in Alexandria.
- Name:** Joe Guiffre on Feb 22, 2011 **167**
Comments: Most of the business establishments at the Trade Center are small and having difficulty surviving this economy. Any "feather" of extra expense may cause some of them to fail. Don't let these good people down.
- Name:** HARRISON DANG on Feb 22, 2011 **168**
Comments:
- Name:** James E. Jarrett on Feb 22, 2011 **169**
Comments:
- Name:** George E. Kostel on Feb 22, 2011 **170**
Comments:
- Name:** Keith Fimian on Feb 22, 2011 **171**
Comments:
- Name:** John Ross on Feb 23, 2011 **172**
Comments:
- Name:** Michael D. Rockefeller on Feb 23, 2011 **173**
Comments:
- Name:** Laura Machanic on Feb 23, 2011 **174**
Comments:
- Name:** John M. Camp on Feb 23, 2011 **175**
Comments: Too many taxes now....of all sorts. Cut the budget, cut the employees, cut the pension benefits, cut the DASH
- Name:** Sam Chamberlain on Feb 23, 2011 **176**
Comments:
- Name:** Connie Dale on Feb 23, 2011 **177**

Comments: This tax would be a hardship on Small Businesses in throughout Alexandria and does not reflect the spirit of supporting small and retail type business. If anything it is a deterrant for anyone considering a start-up or a re-location as we have done in August of 2009. I am a member in the Chamber of Commerce and our position is not supportive of this initiative. Many small business owners I am friends with are outraged and will suffer financially which will be yet another reason to leave the City should they already be suffering due to the current economy. Look up and down King Street and count how many empty storefronts you see since the end of 2008. Our City officials do not have their finger on the pulse of local entrepreneurs.

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Name: Trish Chandler on Feb 23, 2011 **178**
Comments:

Name: Kristen Coffield on Feb 23, 2011 **179**
Comments: This is a sure way to turn Historic Old Town Alexandria into another mall, the only stores that will be able to afford to do business here will be the chains. How about a sliding scale.

Name: Anonymous on Feb 23, 2011 **180**
Comments:

Name: David Hudgins on Feb 23, 2011 **181**
Comments:

Name: Jeff Erber on Feb 23, 2011 **182**
Comments:

Name: Laura Francis on Feb 24, 2011 **183**
Comments: How in the world do you expect reputable, desirable businesses to maintain a presence in our town when you price them out of the already faltering market!?

Name: Joseph Corey on Feb 24, 2011 **184**
Comments: if you are pro business, the taxes should be reduced, not increased.. If our sales decrease, we spend less.. If city revenues decrease, it just raises taxes.. If the city was run like a business, it would be out of business!!!! Wake up.. Soon we will be driven out of business..

Name: Sebastien Tavel on Feb 24, 2011 **185**
Comments:

Name: Mary Tavel on Feb 24, 2011 **186**
Comments:

Name: Leonard Calvert 111 on Feb 24, 2011 **187**
Comments:

Name: Dennis Bradshaw on Feb 24, 2011 **188**
Comments: Stop this bill!!

Name: Laura Simmons on Feb 25, 2011 **189**
Comments: Look at the number of vacant buildings that should be filled by small businesses. This tax will only assure more closings and change the complexion of the city in a negative way. Small businesses are key to growth and new jobs. You do not want to reverse what is starting to look like a rebound for the city.

Name: Stephen A. Robinson on Feb 25, 2011 **190**
Comments: We as small business owners already pay far too many taxes to do business in the City of Alexandria. I feel this would only for others out of business.

Name: Pamela Valenzuela on Feb 25, 2011 **191**
Comments: I am a small business owner, with my office in Alexandria, VA, and have had to curtail expenditures in the past few years, and would hope the City would curtail taxes that will injure my business further. Thank you.

Name: Robert L King, President - MSR Inc. on Feb 25, 2011 **192**
Comments: MSR owns property at 206/208 King Street and the current taxes on the property are already a significant burden to both MSR and it's tenant. Any NEW tax should be born evenly by all parties in Alexandria

Name: Troy Englert on Feb 25, 2011 **193**
Comments: No More Taxes!!!!!!

Name: Jay Thomas on Feb 25, 2011 **194**

Comments: As a small business owner struggling to keep my business open, I cannot believe that this add on tax is being considered. As a business that has not released any employee's over the last two years and is trying to do the right thing by not reducing their pay, it is hard to understand how you can expect small, family owned business to continue stay on the city with these types of taxes. Please protect our business and my employee's by refusing this add-on tax. Jay Thomas Owner Alphagraphics

Name: Lee McAllister on Feb 25, 2011 **195**

Comments: The City has put me out of business, cost me my house, office and more. Many of my clients have also gone bankrupt in the City because of red tape at the permit office and taxes out of control, favoritism and corruption at City hall. Meanwhile they need to send their kids to private schools if they continue to live in the city. I tell all my restaurant clients to open elsewhere and help them find spaces in other jurisdictions so they do not get hurt by the City

Name: Matt McKinnis on Feb 25, 2011 **196**

Comments:

Name: Linda Constantine on Feb 26, 2011 **197**

Comments:

Name: Joe Corey on Feb 27, 2011 **198**

Comments: Don't balance your mistakes on our backs. We make less, we spend less. Plain and simple. There comes a time when taxes will drive business away. That time has come. Business will leave or fail to come in when confronted with an oppressive tax Program.

Name: Caity Davis on Feb 27, 2011 **199**

Comments:

Name: Jill Stump on Feb 27, 2011 **200**

Comments:

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- Name:** Garett Schallinske on Feb 27, 2011 **201**
Comments:
- Name:** Jay Palermino on Feb 27, 2011 **202**
Comments: Defeat the commercial add-on tax, please.
- Name:** Virginia Barlow on Feb 28, 2011 **203**
Comments: Our small businesses are on the verge of total collapse and this proposal will only cause the final straw for businesses barely able to pay their bills. With consumers buying far less but expenses going up many more businesses will close. The city relies on these small businesses for revenue, what will the city do when here are no more small businesses to support it? Not the time for this at all.
- Name:** Cynthia Davis on Feb 28, 2011 **204**
Comments:
- Name:** Ben Roberts on Feb 28, 2011 **205**
Comments:
- Name:** Andrea Smith on Feb 28, 2011 **206**
Comments:
- Name:** *Anonymous* on Feb 28, 2011 **207**
Comments:
- Name:** Jennifer Schwartz on Mar 1, 2011 **208**
Comments:
- Name:** Nancy Pollard on Mar 1, 2011 **209**
Comments: Many of us live here and have established small independent businesses to enrich the fabric of Alexandria's central business district. We have seen commercial buildings for lease and for sale. This destructive tax will make selling and renting these buildings even more difficult. Institute a city sales tax on sodas and vending machines instead.
- Name:** *Anonymous* on Mar 1, 2011 **210**
Comments:
- Name:** Jennifer Donohue on Mar 1, 2011 **211**
Comments: resident of and business owner in Old Town
- Name:** James Matthews on Mar 2, 2011 **212**
Comments: This is a very difficult business environment for small business, business is uniformly down. This tax is a difficult burden to bear. It also discourages businesses from relocating to Alexandria.
- Name:** Elizabeth Todd on Mar 2, 2011 **213**
Comments:
- Name:** Adrien Cotton on Mar 2, 2011 **214**

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Expenses Made Easier, Smarter, With Concur® Breeze. Get Free Trial
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Comments: I oppose any tax on small business. Period. In this economy, it is insensitive and frankly short sided for the City to tax us MORE. Adrien Cotton Co-Owner Fitness on the Run, LLC

Name: Ben Davis on Mar 2, 2011 **215**
Comments:

Name: Daniel Ryal on Mar 2, 2011 **216**
Comments:

Name: Ann Ije on Mar 2, 2011 **217**
Comments: This tax would strain a new small business like myself as well as all other small businesses! Please reconsider other options for funding transportation!

Name: Alison Lynn on Mar 2, 2011 **218**
Comments: Cut the budget instead of continuing to raise taxes like you have done for the last several years. It is gross mismanagement.

Name: Boyd Walker on Mar 2, 2011 **219**
Comments:

Name: Kenneth M. Boland on Mar 2, 2011 **220**
Comments: While I agree these transportation improvements should be funded, I believe it is unfair to put this tax only on the back of commercial property owners only. There is no proof that commercial property owners are contributing to the transportation needs more than any other citizen in Alexandria. This tax is not fair. Doing something that needs to be done (funding transportation improvements) the wrong way is just wrong. This tax should be equally divided on all of us.

Name: William D. Cammack on Mar 2, 2011 **221**
Comments:

Name: Abigail on Mar 2, 2011 **222**
Comments:

Name: Robert Gasiewicz on Mar 3, 2011 **223**
Comments:

Name: Madelyn Smith on Mar 3, 2011 **224**
Comments:

Name: Mark X. LaPierre, ASLA on Mar 3, 2011 **225**
Comments: LAPIERRE STUDIO, PLLC Landscape Architects 1212 Prince Street Alexandria VA 22314

Name: *Anonymous* on Mar 4, 2011 **226**
Comments:

Name: Matt Timms on Mar 4, 2011 **227**
Comments:

Name: Mark Ahart on Mar 4, 2011 **228**
Comments:

Name: Ken Balbuena on Mar 4, 2011 **229**
Comments: A better alternative than raising the tax is to reduce the commercial vacancy rate. An increase in commercial property taxes discourages businesses from moving or relocating to the City of Alexandria. The fewer businesses there are, the greater the vacancy rate is and the less successful the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce's "Try It Local" campaign is. Please do not raise the commercial add-on tax.

Name: Monica Bell on Mar 4, 2011 **230**
Comments:

Name: Timothy R. Geary on Mar 4, 2011 **231**
Comments:

Name: Nina Latimer on Mar 4, 2011 **232**

Comments:**Name:** Deborah Tait on Mar 4, 2011**Comments:**

233

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Name: Lani Gering on Mar 4, 2011**Comments:****Name:** Heidi Burkhardt on Mar 4, 2011**Comments:** Please say NO!

235

Name: Joe Waldman on Mar 4, 2011**Comments:**

236

Name: Serge And Wendy Albert on Mar 4, 2011

Comments: With the monthly increases on all of the products that we use from butter, flour, sugar, meats and fish this tax just might be the straw that breaks the camels back. We have not raised our prices since 1998 and the rising prices have cut out all profit from our small business. Since we are our own "landlords" there is no one else to pass this tax on to except our customers and the community that we support with in-kind donations of food and gift certificates. This is something that we do not want to do. Selling the business and moving to France sounds better and better all the time.

237

Name: Alexandra Khalaf on Mar 4, 2011**Comments:**

238

Name: Michael Guiffre on Mar 4, 2011**Comments:**

239

Name: Edward T. Brennan, Jr. on Mar 4, 2011**Comments:**

240

Name: Kristen Reamy on Mar 4, 2011**Comments:** NO MORE TAX!!!!!!!

241

Name: Joseph Egerton on Mar 4, 2011

Comments: I feel certain that any add-on taxes to the small business community in Alexandria would only further the loss of character and charm to Old Town Alexandria. We are losing quality small businesses right and left, and any additional expense will only cause more businesses to close. Since the beginning of 2011 there are now three quality businesses closing their doors in Old Town: Artcraft Collection, La Muse, and now Banana Tree (leaving March 31, 2011). Banana Tree is moving to the internet because business is so slow in Alexandria, and the parking has made it even worse. Be mindful that there is a ripple effect here: Other businesses such as food establishments lose the patronage of the shop owners and employees when they close. My observation is that spaces are filled mostly by foreigners who must bring their own native food to work because they never patronize the lunch venues, and their offerings are not really what Alexandrians and visitors are accustomed to. You see very few of their bags on the street. If the character of Old Town further deteriorates, marketing the city will become very difficult. There's plenty of money to be had by putting parking meters in Del Ray. They have 14 commercial blocks vs 18 blocks on King Street, and the parking there is very, very tight. On most days in Old Town on King Street you could park an 18 wheeler on most any block at various times of the day.

242

Name: Dave Gimbel Signs By Tomorrow on Mar 4, 2011**Comments:** Please help small businesses stay afloat to generate revenues for Alexandria. Thank you

243

Name: Diane G. Murphy on Mar 4, 2011**Comments:** I have written a letter.

244

Name: Karl Smith on Mar 4, 2011**Comments:**

245

Name: Anonymous on Mar 4, 2011**Comments:**

246

Name: Ken Lopez on Mar 4, 2011**Comments:**

247

- Name:** Laura Norfolk on Mar 4, 2011 248
Comments:

- Name:** Alyssa Theodore, Co-Owner, The Sugar Cube on Mar 4, 2011 249
Comments:

- Name:** Christopher Campagna on Mar 4, 2011 250
Comments: NO NO NO - Not CAT.

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Name: Charlie Lindsey on Mar 5, 2011 Comments:	251
Name: Lorraine Aprile on Mar 5, 2011 Comments:	252
Name: Tracey Koch on Mar 5, 2011 Comments:	253
Name: Elizabeth Farrell on Mar 5, 2011 Comments:	254
Name: Patricia White on Mar 5, 2011 Comments: At a time when commercial building owners are already struggling to compete with commercial space in other counties, and to fill their properties here by offering attractive rent rates, raising taxes on commercial properties is exactly the wrong thing to do- if you want Alexandria to remain a viable place to do business. As a commercial real estate broker, I am painfully aware of all the vacant commercial space in Alexandria. Further, there have already been selective- but substantial- tax increases last year on some of Alexandria's commercial buildings. Sincerely, Patricia L. White (Cell: 703-981-8032)	255
Name: Richard Dorman on Mar 5, 2011 Comments:	256
Name: Adron Krekeler on Mar 5, 2011 Comments: Transportation is everyones issue. Everyone should pay their share.	257
Name: Gant Redmon on Mar 5, 2011 Comments: The key is to increase revenue by expanding the commercial tax base. It would not cost the City additional funds to streamline development process to encourage good development in the City.	258
Name: Phil McCombie - Perk's And Thailand Royal St on Mar 5, 2011 Comments: Alexandria promotes tourism. Tourists do not come here to look at peoples residences. They come for the commercial/retail attractions. They need to survive. This proposal will ensure that a lot of them will not! Find another way.	259
Name: Michael K Cornish on Mar 5, 2011 Comments: The City is nickle and diming us to death and pushing us to relocate. If you really want businesses to move keep up this sort of thing.	260
Name: Ron Caffi on Mar 5, 2011 Comments: As a small struggling small business owner in the City my real estate taxes have almost tripled in the 9 years since my move here from Arlington. I have faced with declining revenues since this recession hit 3 years ago yet my taxes continue to increase. This tax will make it next to impossible for me to afford to stay in the City to conduct business. This tax is would be terribly inequitable and allow only big business to stay in the City. If that is the City's objective then move forward with the tax. I am struggling.	261
Name: Allen Schirmer on Mar 5, 2011 Comments:	262

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- Name:** Denise Dick on Mar 5, 2011 **263**
Comments:
- Name:** Margaret Smith on Mar 5, 2011 **264**
Comments: This tax will add additional tax burden to our small business base during these economic times and cause more closures. Consider a broad based sales tax to include all of Alexandria patrons to spread over a larger population than just the small business base.
- Name:** Nina Tisara on Mar 5, 2011 **265**
Comments: I just got word that yet another King Street Business, Banana Tree, is moving it's location to the web. As the costs of doing business increase, small, independent business just can't compete. If we lose our unique shops, we will turn ourselves into yet another mall. Surely this is not a good solution to funding our transportation needs.
- Name:** Lisa Capobianco/ King Street Blues on Mar 5, 2011 **266**
Comments: Small businesses have struggled since 2008. An additional tax would set most of us back even further- there has to be another way to balance the budget without further taxing small businesses- it could quite possibly put some of us out of business. The City depends on the independent shops and restaurants to create a unique dining and shopping destination- do not jeopardize this
- Name:** *Anonymous* on Mar 6, 2011 **267**
Comments:
- Name:** Bill Tinsley on Mar 6, 2011 **268**
Comments: Small business drives the economy and creates much needed job opportunities. By imposing this tax, you will stop growth and economic development. Remember to not shoot the cow that gives you the milk.
- Name:** Lorin S Curt on Mar 6, 2011 **269**
Comments:
- Name:** Kathleen Dunn on Mar 6, 2011 **270**
Comments: I have been wanting to open a new shop in Alexandria, but won't (and can't) because of the current tax burden. Raise them will just keep new businesses from opening and force many other small businesses to close their doors. Am I going to have to move to Canada for more favorable taxes????
- Name:** Leslie Nagao on Mar 6, 2011 **271**
Comments:
- Name:** Perry Keeton on Mar 6, 2011 **272**
Comments: Take a look at this a year from now and realize how you have reaped what you have sown. It shall surely be the result of an unintended, but easily predictable, circumstance. At that time be sure to reload so you can shoot yourself in the other foot.
- Name:** Rhonda Smith on Mar 6, 2011 **273**
Comments:
- Name:** Dorothee Oberdhan on Mar 6, 2011 **274**
Comments:
- Name:** Vivian K. Keller on Mar 6, 2011 **275**
Comments: Please do not raise taxes on the businesses in our community. I am afraid that this additional burden will cause businesses to either close or to lay off some of their employees. I also believe that businesses will be forced to raise prices to cover the tax, meaning less people will be able to afford their services or products causing the businesses to lose revenue. The outcome will be less money in Alexandria's coffers as businesses that close, pay no tax; as businesses that make less money, pay less taxes.
- Name:** Virginia P Norton on Mar 6, 2011 **276**
Comments: This tax will essentially kill our small business. That will mean 5 or more people without jobs in Alexandria.
- Name:** Bob McIntyre on Mar 6, 2011 **277**
Comments: I am single and eat out all of the time. When Alexandria raised their taxes I started going across the to Fairfax and Arlington to eat. With these new taxes the prices for restaurants will increase and make my decision not to eat, or shop, in Alexandria. My \$10-\$15 per day is no big thing but how many others will think the same way. This will drive business away from Alexandria and then many open stores will be available for no

renters. Thus, a Detroit style of slums will occur here in Alexandria. Check into the waste in the government BEFORE this step is made. You will lose more revenue in the long run.

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Name: Clinton Craddock on Mar 6, 2011

278

Comments: Honorable Sirs and Madam Council Members, The tax burden on the people and businesses are already too high. Your proposed increase is outrageous. You were elected to control costs not to tax and spend. Reductions in waste should occur before any new taxes. There is too much bloat in city government already. Fancy offices, high tech equipment to write tickets, parking officers who ride around and leave cars running while they walk their overweight bodies 4 feet to write a ticket, wasteful. Too many people not doing their job but complaining of being overworked. Please do not implement this upon pain of defeat in the next election or a recall action being taken.

Name: Robert Frere on Mar 6, 2011

279

Comments:

Name: Mary Catherine Coleman on Mar 6, 2011

280

Comments:

Name: Brian Adams on Mar 6, 2011

281

Comments: I live in S. Arlington, one block from the Alexandria city limit. I think this tax will hurt businesses and drive shoppers elsewhere when it's passed on to consumers by higher prices.

Name: Kirsten Obadal on Mar 6, 2011

282

Comments: Please do not raise taxes on Alexandria Businesses.

Name: Mark S. Feldheim on Mar 6, 2011

283

Comments: While I believe that the add-on tax is a valuable tool, the proposed transportation projects do not adequately relate to expansion of business opportunities for the commercial activities subject to the tax!

Name: Ramon J. Kazanjian on Mar 6, 2011

284

Comments: Listen to the advice of Frank Fannon and do not add an additional tax our businesses. This tax will not only raise costs for all of us, but will also provide an incentive for businesses to move out of Alexandria. It may also contribute to the failure of some businesses during these difficult economic times. With a resulting diminished business tax base, you will have shot yourselves in the foot. Then, do not look to residential property owners for the additional taxes. Just reduce the size of government and do not begin new initiatives until better economic times.

Name: Pauline Bacaj on Mar 6, 2011

285

Comments: This tax on small businesses does not make any sense: it will only cripple them.

Name: Susan A. Carleson on Mar 6, 2011

286

Comments: Why are Democrat city officials so ignorant about the effects of taxation? Anybody ever hear the word incentive?

Name: Charles Varpapa DDS on Mar 6, 2011

287

Comments: Are we not already paying enough taxes to fund a poorly lead and poorly run government? To add another tax to small businesses is only to tax the whole community and encourage the uncontrolled spending and mis- management of our tax dollars by the city government.

Name: Lee Hernly on Mar 6, 2011

288

Comments: Considering that the City has a surplus from previous round of tax increases, this is deplorable.

Name: Amy H. Glad on Mar 6, 2011

289

Comments:

Name: Donna Rhodes Dickey on Mar 6, 2011

290

Comments: At this time when so many individuals and families are suffering economically and so many small businesses are just hanging on, to impose this tax on Alexandria businesses will not only hurt them, but the individuals who may need their services. I know transportation is a problem in this area, but think it is unconscionable to impose this kind of tax with so many businesses and families just hanging on. I would ask that you table your transportation projects or fund them in some other way until we all are on firmer ground economically.

Name: Russell Axelson Jr on Mar 6, 2011

291

Comments: I certainly feel this should be looked at again, the business area of Alexandria already has enough burden to face. This tax will be passed on to the consumer base of citizens in Alexandria and the visitors that a

lot of small business depend on to stay in business!. Lets look at this tax before we are sorry about something before it is too late. regards, Russell Axelson Jr

Name: *Anonymous* on Mar 6, 2011 **292**

Comments: This is no the time to raise taxes of any kind. You might need to fix the roads, but this is not the time to tax. The roads can wait until the economy is on better footing.

Name: Jim Karabin on Mar 6, 2011 **293**

Comments:

Name: Michael Whitley on Mar 6, 2011 **294**

Comments: Alexandrians should not have to pay for a new and un-necessary metro station at Potomac Yards. If this station is desired, developers of the area should pay for it and recoup their costs in sales of residential and commercial properties.

Name: Daniel Tangora on Mar 7, 2011 **295**

Comments: Death to socialism

Name: Harriett G. McCune on Mar 7, 2011 **296**

Comments: I urge you to reject any increase in the commercial property tax. Alexandria has far too much empty storefronts as it is. Why would you want to contribute to more businesses leaving Alexandria? Agenda: Alexandria had a program recently about why it is so hard to do business in Alexandria. Why make it worse?

Name: Jennifer Smith on Mar 7, 2011 **297**

Comments: My company has barely been able to survive in this economy. And, I'm working seven days a week, 18 hours per day just to keep my doors open. If the city imposes one more tax, I can assure you, with total certainty, that I will move my business to another city that values and appreciates my business and the people I employ.

Name: John E Frawley on Mar 7, 2011 **298**

Comments: I find it very disturbing that the only solution our government representatives has is the raising of taxes. As a business owner who struggles to provide the good health care and other benefits to it's employees in our current economic environment with sale down over 30 %. Hanging on to our employees and their current benefits cost me a \$125,000.00 loss in 2010. Raising our taxes in a down economy by \$6,000.00 will result in more layoffs. Assuming a 10% profit margin will take \$60,000.00 of gross income just to pay your proposed tax. Government needs to quit looking at the working man for solutions to your revenue short falls.

Name: Dennis Greene For Security Storage Company on Mar 7, 2011 **299**

Comments:

Name: Cathleen Walpole on Mar 7, 2011 **300**

Comments:

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Name: Darlene Kuny - American Optometric Association on Mar 7, 2011 **301**
Comments:

Name: Victoria Vergason on Mar 7, 2011 **302**
Comments: Small businesses are truly having a difficult time surviving financially. All the community has to do is notice how many long-standing businesses on King Street have recently closed their doors. This tax will just cause more small businesses to consider closing or moving to other locals as well as strongly discourage any potential new businesses from opening. I strongly oppose this increase in Alexandria's commercial property tax.

Name: Daniel D. Mauler on Mar 7, 2011 **303**
Comments:

Name: Edward Moser on Mar 7, 2011 **304**
Comments: Owner, Moser Ink. Publications, Alexandria

Name: Heather Wright on Mar 7, 2011 **305**
Comments:

Name: Sheila Cantrell on Mar 7, 2011 **306**
Comments: Let us not put any additional taxes on the backs of small business community . People need jobs and small businesses cannot afford to hire if they have additional taxes.

Name: Nadine on Mar 7, 2011 **307**
Comments:

Name: Robert M. Marino on Mar 7, 2011 **308**
Comments:

Name: Gordon P Peyton on Mar 7, 2011 **309**
Comments:

Name: Paul Maloof on Mar 7, 2011 **310**
Comments: I strongly oppose the commerical add-on tax.

Name: Eileen Warren on Mar 7, 2011 **311**
Comments: This is no time to increase spending and taxes. Cut the waste out of existing programs as businesses have to do in tough economic times.

Name: Nancy Herrman, Tiffany Tavern on Mar 7, 2011 **312**
Comments: As a King Street business owner, I can tell you that I am sick of all the oppressive fees and taxes that are levied on small family-owned enterprises.

Name: Patricia Green on Mar 7, 2011 **313**
Comments:

Name: Melissa Scalph on Mar 7, 2011 **314**

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Comments:

- Name:** Stacey Swartz on Mar 7, 2011 **315**
Comments:
- Name:** Mindy Lyle on Mar 7, 2011 **316**
Comments: Alexandria is not friendly to business or development. By imposing an additional tax you further discourage the location of businesses to our community.
- Name:** Derek Bentoff on Mar 7, 2011 **317**
Comments:
- Name:** Michael Meyers on Mar 7, 2011 **318**
Comments:
- Name:** Jack Ponton on Mar 7, 2011 **319**
Comments:
- Name:** Bob Tetu on Mar 7, 2011 **320**
Comments: This is absolutely ridiculous. Our small business don't need to be taxed anymore. Further, in times of recession, you cut spending, not raise taxes.
- Name:** *Anonymous* on Mar 7, 2011 **321**
Comments:
- Name:** Leslie R. Pickens, M.D. on Mar 7, 2011 **322**
Comments:
- Name:** Linda Blythe on Mar 7, 2011 **323**
Comments: In this economy no new taxes should be imposed especially the commercial add-on tax.
- Name:** Rob Baird on Mar 8, 2011 **324**
Comments:
- Name:** Barak Campbell on Mar 8, 2011 **325**
Comments:
- Name:** Dan Keslar on Mar 8, 2011 **326**
Comments: Resident, Alexandria.
- Name:** Peter D. Dundas on Mar 8, 2011 **327**
Comments:
- Name:** Beth Stevenson on Mar 9, 2011 **328**
Comments: My husband is a small business owner - but, not in the Alexandria area. I can tell you, most small businesses are hanging on my a thread right now. This tax is an unfair burden for them to have to shoulder.
- Name:** Dave Abdo on Mar 9, 2011 **329**
Comments:
- Name:** Alvin Boone on Mar 10, 2011 **330**
Comments:
- Name:** Eric Fitzgerald on Mar 12, 2011 **331**
Comments: This bunch of liberals will likely vote yes and spend more money, however I vote n
- Name:** Michael Donohue on Mar 12, 2011 **332**
Comments: No more taxes
- Name:** *Anonymous* on Mar 12, 2011 **333**
Comments:
- Name:** Eugene B McDaniel on Mar 12, 2011 **334**

Comments: oppose any additional tax

Name: Nancy R. Jennings on Mar 12, 2011

Comments: Do not increase our bond debt for huge projects--i.e. Potomac Yard metro station or an HOV ramp onto Seminary Road--that do not SOLVE our present transportation problems.

335

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Name: Shirley Carey on Mar 12, 2011

Comments:

336

Name: Connie Wilcox on Mar 12, 2011

Comments:

337

Name: Erika Davis on Mar 12, 2011

Comments:

338

Name: Mike Engel on Mar 12, 2011

Comments: Does Alexandria still have a stand alone AAA rating without the tax? Then cut spending on amenities.

339

Name: Josephine Huang on Mar 12, 2011

Comments: objection. this would kill the small businesses and damage to the National Economy. Josephine huang

340

Name: Curtis Morehead on Mar 12, 2011

Comments: As a partial owner of a high tech industry, I strongly oppose any new taxes on business. The existing taxes are already oppressive enough that we are strongly considering a relocation plan to an area that is more business friendly. This existing tax structure favors restaurants and low end retail establishments over the technology industries that hold more promise for the future of Alexandria's long term growth. These taxes and the abysmal parking situation, place a significant burden on our employees, our clients, and our business as a whole. Any additional taxes levied will ensure that we fast track our relocation plan and take our jobs with us.

341

Name: Carlos Cecchi on Mar 12, 2011

Comments:

342

Name: James Derrington on Mar 12, 2011

Comments:

343

Name: *Anonymous* on Mar 12, 2011

Comments: Lousy economy, fewer people coming to Old Town, empty store fronts, new metered parking on the 100 and 200 block of lower King St. and now this new tax. Really? What other burdens will small businesses be asked to endure?

344

Name: Katy Cannady on Mar 12, 2011

Comments: I think this would be the death knell for getting developers to include some retail in their developments. They would know that finding tenants for small shops, as opposed to big box operations, would be impossible. Yet neighbors and occupants of new properties see this retail as a benefit. We like unique shops better than we like national retailers and big box stores.

345

Name: John E. Cole on Mar 12, 2011

Comments:

346

Name: Catherine Corcoran on Mar 12, 2011

Comments:

347

Name: Christopher St Pierre on Mar 12, 2011

Comments:

348

Name: Richard Totoiu on Mar 12, 2011

Comments: Our Mom and Pop business - Studio Antiques - has been in Old Town for almost thirty years. Last year was the worst year we have had in the last 25 years. Fully half of the antiques businesses and half of the local art galleries have closed in the last three years. We are barely hanging on - this is not the time to impose new taxes on small business.

349

Name: Kevin Flood on Mar 12, 2011

350

Comments: What kind of loop-holes exist for BIG business? As a small business owner, I struggle to stay in business now.

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Name: Aida Fekir on Mar 12, 2011 Comments:	351
Name: Jennifer Russell on Mar 12, 2011 Comments: Having been a former business owner crushed by state and city taxes, I can attest that small businesses cannot with stand any additional tax.	352
Name: James Egnew on Mar 12, 2011 Comments:	353
Name: Maureen McHugh on Mar 12, 2011 Comments:	354
Name: Marsha H. Murphy, CPA on Mar 12, 2011 Comments:	355
Name: Marci Weis on Mar 12, 2011 Comments: Outrageous. I strongly oppose this	356
Name: Dr. Timothy Corcoran on Mar 12, 2011 Comments: Alexandria City is becoming increasingly hostile to small business with multiple layers of taxes imposed upon business owners. By refusing to impose the additional commercial add-on tax, that will send a message that the City values small businesses in the community.	357
Name: Brendan Corcoran on Mar 12, 2011 Comments: Please stop.	358
Name: Mark Allen on Mar 12, 2011 Comments: Just because our City Council has the authority to pass this tax doesn't mean they should. Instead, if they want to raise taxes for transportation issues, they should show some political courage and raise taxes on all segments of the taxpaying population. Unless, of course, some prefer seeing more vacant storefronts and office buildings along King Street. This tax displays a fundamental misunderstanding of what's going on in the world today. Please don't do this to the City I love.	359
Name: Timothy Clune on Mar 12, 2011 Comments:	360
Name: Dianna Tafazoli on Mar 13, 2011 Comments:	361
Name: Dave Nelson on Mar 13, 2011 Comments:	362
Name: Elsa Lee on Mar 13, 2011 Comments: Do not tax small businesses!	363
Name: Walter R. Lee Jr on Mar 13, 2011	364

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Comments:

Name: William V. Brierre, Jr. on Mar 13, 2011 Comments:	365
Name: Barbara Toliver on Mar 13, 2011 Comments: I am a small business owner, and we are taxed enough.	366
Name: Yvonne Williams on Mar 13, 2011 Comments:	367
Name: Brian C. Smith on Mar 14, 2011 Comments:	368
Name: Annette Antonelli on Mar 14, 2011 Comments: I have a spa on Patrick Street and I am BARELY hanging on through this economy as it is. I won't be in business if my expenses increase. Thank you. AA	369
Name: Craig Romm on Mar 14, 2011 Comments:	370
Name: David W Haartz on Mar 14, 2011 Comments:	371
Name: Mark Tomeucci on Mar 14, 2011 Comments: Advantage SCI strongly supports this petition to reject increasing the commercial property tax. Advantage SCI, LLC supports Alexandria businesses and does all that it can to help promote business within Alexandria.	372
Name: Casey Stauffer on Mar 14, 2011 Comments:	373
Name: Frederick Krambeck on Mar 14, 2011 Comments: I am a resident of Old Town (810 Cameron Street) and I see far too many businesses closing down on King Street. It is the quality of these businesses that makes Old Town worth living in. I believe that shifting tax burdens from residents to businesses is against the long-term interests of residents.	374
Name: CATHLEEN CURTIN on Mar 14, 2011 Comments: Please protect the small business owners of Old Town by rejecting an increase in comm'l property tax. Respectfully Cathleen Curtin AIA Cathleen Curtin Architects PLC	375
Name: Lauen Catts on Mar 14, 2011 Comments: No new taxes!	376
Name: Lorraine Barnes on Mar 14, 2011 Comments:	377
Name: <i>Anonymous</i> on Mar 14, 2011 Comments:	378
Name: Jodi Casamo on Mar 14, 2011 Comments: I oppose the add on tax.	379
Name: Sean McEneaney on Mar 14, 2011 Comments: NO!	380
Name: Troy A. Maisel on Mar 14, 2011 Comments:	381
Name: Roger K. Bohr on Mar 14, 2011 Comments:	382
Name: <i>Anonymous</i> on Mar 14, 2011	383

Comments:**Name:** Tom Russo on Mar 14, 2011**Comments:** Now is not the time to put extra burdens on small businesses which are the backbone of the community. Thank you.**384****Name:** Joseph E. Davis on Mar 14, 2011**Comments:** Remember what King Street looked like back in the late '60s/early '70s? That's what your ever-increasing taxes will do to "my" Old Town. I encourage the Mayor, City Administrator and City Council walk King Street together from the waterfront to Metro and count the number of vacant storefronts. Then go to National Harbor and count theirs. Alexandria needs to refocus itself on business initiatives, not social giveaways. If not, then one day soon those in leadership position are going to wake up and ask "Where'd everybody go?"**385****Name:** Stephen Lloyd on Mar 14, 2011**Comments:****386****Name:** Tommy Andrews on Mar 15, 2011**Comments:****387****Name:** Jim Lindsay on Mar 16, 2011**Comments:** We are considering moving out of the city due to the heavy tax burden. This might confirm our decision. Please do not add this tax. Jim Lindsay Adult Companion Care, Inc.**388****Name:** Tim Egan on Mar 16, 2011**Comments:****389****Name:** Victor S. Parra on Mar 16, 2011**Comments:** As a business property owner in the city of Alexandria, I ask that you reject any attempt to increase commercial property tax. Our business, which is largely dependent on discretionary spending, has been hard hit hard by the economic downturn. We've had to trim costs and reduce hiring as our revenues have contracted. Any increase in operating costs will hurt our business severely.**390****Name:** Rose Gentile on Mar 17, 2011**Comments:** I am against any increase in commercial property tax. A lean mean government should be the focus.**391****Name:** Edward G. Abramson, M.D. on Mar 18, 2011**Comments:** This tax will place an additional burden on our medical practice which is already under severe strain because of declining reimbursement and increased regulation. Once again the city is trying to increase their revenues on the backs of citizens already over taxed in this time of economic stress. the city needs to cut expenses and undergo belt tightening like everybody in the private sector. Alexandria has always been over the top in it's tax policy, and need to hold off on some of it's funding proposals.**392****Name:** Todd Healy on Mar 18, 2011**Comments:** I am outraged! Small business can not continue to survive these rent increases. The add-on tax will be passed on to the small business owner. I have already received a letter indicating such from my landlord. City Council needs to stop gouging the small businesses and residents of Alexandria. Todd and Laraine Healy Gallery Lafayette**393****Name:** Todd Healy on Mar 18, 2011**Comments:** I am outraged! Small business can not continue to survive these rent increases. The add-on tax will be passed on to the small business owner. I have already received a letter indicating such from my landlord. City Council needs to stop gouging the small businesses and residents of Alexandria. Todd and Laraine Healy Gallery Lafayette**394****Name:** Brian Quinlan on Mar 18, 2011**Comments:** Bring spending down to pre-2000 levels.**395****Name:** Kent Baake on Mar 19, 2011**Comments:** no taxes**396****Name:** Roger Vasilas on Mar 19, 2011**Comments:****397****Name:** Ken McLain on Mar 19, 2011**Comments:** Concur with petition.**398**

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Name: Kate Schlabach on Mar 20, 2011

399

Comments: With the increased meter charges and the addition of the frequently non-functioning meter machines we have already experienced a decrease in business. Now with the extra burden of the add-on tax who knows how many of us will be able to hang on.

Name: *Anonymous* on Mar 21, 2011

400

Comments:

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Oppose the Commercial Add-on Tax

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Name: Len Brevik on Mar 21, 2011 401
Comments: We are a non-profit association that owns a building in Alexandria, VA. This is a significant increase that small businesses and non-profits will have a hard time paying. Look at budget cuts before slamming your business community with a tax increase on top of a bad economy. Vote no for this tax increase!
Len Brevik

Name: Judy Bradt on Mar 21, 2011 402
Comments: I'm signing this both as an Alexandria business owner in my own right and also as a part-time employee of Sportrock in Alexandria.

Name: David Currie on Mar 21, 2011 403
Comments: This tax is an assault on the policy infrastructure that support the development of businesses in Alexandria. This tax will drive business further into the suburbs of Virginia and hinder the competitiveness of Alexandrian businesses.

Name: Myriam Souaya on Mar 21, 2011 404
Comments: Please don't hurt small businesses that provide jobs in our community. Profit margins for most businesses are well below 10 percent. Increasing taxes means by definition that most businesses will have to transfer the financial strain to consumers in order to stay open, and in turn this will result in less business and less income for people who work, live and pay taxes in Alexandria. A tax increase as extreme as this one will cripple small businesses in Alexandria and hurt the tourism economy. Please find a way to distribute the financial cost of improved transportation in a more equitable way. Small businesses should and will be willing to contribute, but they can't help if they can't stay in business.

Name: Elias Souaya on Mar 21, 2011 405
Comments:

Name: Anonymous on Mar 21, 2011 406
Comments:

Name: Anonymous on Mar 21, 2011 407
Comments:

Name: Daniel Kozak on Mar 21, 2011 408
Comments:

Name: Josh Hecht on Mar 21, 2011 409
Comments:

Name: Adair Lindsay on Mar 21, 2011 410
Comments: To Whom It May Concern, I work and play in Alexandria. My rock climbing gym, Sportrock, will undoubtedly have to increase monthly dues (again) if the 12.5 cent add-on tax for commercial properties is implemented. Please do not punish small, family-owned businesses with this add-on tax! Sincerely, Adair Lindsay, MS, RD

Name: Anonymous on Mar 21, 2011 411
Comments:

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GE 2010 Tax Rates
Get the Facts on GE's 2010 Tax Rates and Earnings
www.gersports.com/ta...

Name: Jason Montecalvo on Mar 22, 2011 Comments:	412
Name: James Anastasion on Mar 22, 2011 Comments: To continue and continue to tax businesses and individuals is no solution to recovery from an economic downturn. Individuals have less income to spend and businesses lose profit margin while attempting to compete with other near by businesses that may not have the same tax burden. The only solution is to lower the tax burden to spawn an increase in consumption while simultaneously lowering government spending and costs.	413
Name: Natalie Chin on Mar 22, 2011 Comments:	414
Name: David Burtleson on Mar 22, 2011 Comments:	415
Name: Nick Peterson on Mar 22, 2011 Comments:	416
Name: <i>Anonymous</i> on Mar 23, 2011 Comments:	417
Name: <i>Anonymous</i> on Mar 23, 2011 Comments:	418
Name: Genie Ko on Mar 23, 2011 Comments:	419
Name: Kyle Higgins on Mar 23, 2011 Comments: With every other business boarded up looking for lease holders, you think that raising taxes in a recession would be anathema, but there you go anyway. We are a small business looking for space and are seriously thinking of moving to accomplish because of the tax climate. Just another nail in the coffin. If you want Old Town to look like a strip mall in Manassas, mission accomplished.	420
Name: Anthony Sewell on Mar 24, 2011 Comments: NO MORE TAX INCREASE	421
Name: <i>Anonymous</i> on Mar 24, 2011 Comments: As a 27-year resident of the city, I support this petition.	422
Name: Olivia Swanson on Mar 24, 2011 Comments:	423
Name: Michelle Fatovic on Mar 24, 2011 Comments:	424
Name: <i>Anonymous</i> on Mar 24, 2011 Comments:	425
Name: <i>Anonymous</i> on Mar 24, 2011 Comments:	426
Name: Ruben Duque on Mar 24, 2011 Comments:	427
Name: James Philapy on Mar 24, 2011 Comments:	428
Name: <i>Anonymous</i> on Mar 24, 2011 Comments:	429
Name: POTIER on Mar 24, 2011	430

Comments: I am strongly oppose to this non sense tax which unfairly target the small businesses. the city can start saving money by removing the FREE RIDE AND HIGHLY POLLUTING TROLLEY. thus helping the DASH out of its financial troubles. marie

Name: *Anonymous* on Mar 25, 2011

Comments:

431

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Name: Cesar A. Orantes on Mar 25, 2011

Comments: NO increase to the commercial property tax.

432

Name: Michael & Daria Rehwaldt on Mar 25, 2011

Comments: Most of the council & mayor are out of control. Only know how to add, never subtract.

433

Name: Michael & Daria Rehwaldt on Mar 25, 2011

Comments: not the way to bring business to Alexandria or keep them here.

434

Name: Terrie A. Clifford on Mar 26, 2011

Comments:

435

Name: Sarene Cullen on Mar 27, 2011

Comments:

436

Name: Aaron Leibowitz on Mar 27, 2011

Comments:

437

Name: Peter E. O'Lenic on Mar 27, 2011

Comments:

438

Name: Roman Knysh on Mar 28, 2011

Comments:

439

Name: Dr. Daniel E. Cassidy on Mar 28, 2011

Comments: general obligation bonds are the responsible way to raise funds for long term capital investments in transportation infrastructure. Make the city business friendly, not business hostile.

440

Name: Jessica Hill on Mar 28, 2011

Comments:

441

Name: JAY'S SEDAN SERVICE on Mar 29, 2011

Comments:

442

Name: *Anonymous* on Mar 29, 2011

Comments:

443

Name: Christian Bowers on Mar 30, 2011

Comments: Much of the "improved" transportation which this proposed tax on our (largely small) businesses will be used to fund will largely benefit persons passing through our community and not actually stopping and contributing to its economic prosperity. Moreover, the tax will be an impediment for Alexandria's ability to lure new businesses to our community. For these reasons, I cannot support this proposed add-on tax.

444

Name: Margaret Ano on Mar 30, 2011

Comments: I believe Alexandria va is not like Arlington or fairfax county. We are definitely as large consider how many High schools wed have 1. we do not have military bases here or Airports. What we have are too many places in the city where the rent for a dam 1 bedroom apt is over 1,000 a month. Most of the time utilities are not included. Alexandria does not need to keep up with anyone. My opinion is the City only cares about getting money from anyone and does not car how they get it. The City needs to learn compassion and consideration or else we could end up in a ghost town because no one can afford your steep prices. Why do we have a depression because you all are just too dam greedy to stop rasing prices. The city might learn a few lessons if they were homeless or ever has been. That goes for City Mayor, Manager, City Council and all the division Chiefs to boot

445

Name: William Briley on Mar 30, 2011

Comments:

446

Name: Gretchen Lisa Chellson on Mar 30, 2011

447

Comments:

Name: Shara Posner on Mar 31, 2011 **448**
Comments:

Name: Laura Lohman on Mar 31, 2011 **449**
Comments:

Name: Mara L. Territo on Mar 31, 2011 **450**
Comments: Please do not raise the commercial add-on tax. Retail shops in Old Town have it tough too in these hard economic times, please look elsewhere to raise money or spend less money. The parking meter increase last year really hurt business and customers still have that fresh in their minds and it still impacts business negatively--do we really need another hit?

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Name: Pat Dunn on Mar 31, 2011 Comments:	451
Name: Meshelle Armstrong on Mar 31, 2011 Comments:	452
Name: Cathal Armstrong on Mar 31, 2011 Comments:	453
Name: Anonymous on Mar 31, 2011 Comments:	454
Name: Ab Emam - WebDevelopmentGroup.com on Mar 31, 2011 Comments:	455
Name: EVELYN G. FREEMAN on Mar 31, 2011 Comments:	456
Name: Susan Grandgeorge on Mar 31, 2011 Comments: Taxes are passed on to us according to our lease. With our large area of space, this would present a huge increase at an economic time that finds all small businesses struggling. Joe Theismann's Restaurant	457
Name: Reg Brown on Mar 31, 2011 Comments: Seven Year Alexandria Resident. We Can Meet Our Needs a Better Way.	458
Name: Michelle Poteaux on Mar 31, 2011 Comments: The weight should not be solely placed on the business community located in the city of Alexandria. This is a benefit to all and should be paid for by all, not by a small group! The higher taxes to businesses will result in an inevitable increase to overall consumer costs, business failures or companies deciding to go elsewhere. I strongly urge you to reconsider making this not just our burden, but everyone's.	459
Name: Vernon Grandgeorge on Mar 31, 2011 Comments: Many small businesses pay this tax as pass throughs on their lease as I do. A terrible time for small business to take this hit.	460
Name: Dina Katsev Igoe on Mar 31, 2011 Comments: I write to you today as a small business owner in Old Town, Alexandria. I have owned and operated, Apple Seed, a maternity and baby store for five years now. I strongly oppose the commercial add on tax (CAT). This tax will significantly increase our property tax bill. This tax does not encourage businesses to grow and hurts us during a tough economic period. CAT also discourages small businesses from coming to Alexandria and doesn't help them stay open. It would unfairly place the burden on small business rather than spreading the cost. CAT is not the only option that state legislature has given the City to fund transportation projects. Please consider this matter seriously. Thank you. Dina Apple Seed www.appleseedboutique.com 703-535-5446	461
Name: SueAnne Sobert on Apr 1, 2011	462

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Manage Business Expenses
 Expenses Made Easier, Smarter, With Concur® Breeze. Get Free Trial
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Comments: Please do not fund the transportation budget on the backs of small business. After struggling and surviving the recent recession, this is counter-productive and unfair.

Name: Anne Cook on Apr 3, 2011

463

Comments: I agree with the sentiments expressed in this letter, most of all because of the inequity of the cost burden. All who will benefit from transportation improvements should share the expense. A modest increase in all taxes levied, to be ended when this project has been fully funded, i.e. temporary assessment, is one option. Historically low interest rates make borrowing another option worth considering.

Name: Amanda Lasker on Apr 4, 2011

464

Comments: As owner of Gossypia Shopo and 3 properties - commercial - in old town, I support this petition

Name: Shannon McGahey on Apr 4, 2011

465

Comments:

Name: J. Andrew Simmons on Apr 6, 2011

466

Comments:

Name: Eileen Cross on Apr 6, 2011

467

Comments: We have to many small business that can not afford this additional tax .

Name: Craig Shirley on Apr 6, 2011

468

Comments:

Name: Thomas Booth on Apr 7, 2011

469

Comments: We are a small business and are already taxed to death. Anything that discourages business in this economy is a danger to jobs, the economic foundation to our society.

Name: Bill Blackburn on Apr 8, 2011

470

Comments:

Name: Robert Stalder on Apr 10, 2011

471

Comments:

Name: Kim Putens on Apr 11, 2011

472

Comments: With so many small businesses in Alexandria struggling, this Add On Tax would only make it more difficult. It is a tax on small businesses and sends the message that businesses are not welcome in Alexandria.

Name: Kate McMahon on Apr 13, 2011

473

Comments:

Name: Anthony Hughes on Apr 13, 2011

474

Comments: We own glynn jones salon and spa 720 king street in the last 7 years we have gone from 3 to 30 employees and have worked hard to build our business it is so hard for us to pay the real estate taxes already and this new tax is just unfair and wrong alexandria is the most unfriendly place to do business

Name: Michael Willimann on Apr 15, 2011

475

Comments: i'm about to open my first store in old town and hope this type of burden on small businesses is not typical.

Name: Pierre Abushacra on Apr 15, 2011

476

Comments: It is unfair that Businesses take on 100% of the funding burden for these specific transportation projects.

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