Get Out the Vote!

Our founding fathers believed that the success of American democracy depended upon the development of an educated citizenry that would vote wisely to protect its rights and freedoms. Ideally, we would all have the ability to thoroughly research each candidate and ballot measure, but we sometimes have time constraints that prevent us from doing that. For just such situations, I’ve created the following endorsement summary:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ballot Measure | Description | Seattle Times | Issaquah Press | PCO |
| KCLS Proposition 1 | King County Rural Library District Levy Increase | YES | NO | NO |
| ISDProposition 1 | Issaquah School District Maintenance and Operations Replacement Levy | YES | YES | YES |
| ISDProposition 2 | Issaquah School District Capital Projects Levy for Technology/Modernization | YES | YES | YES |
| ISDProposition 3 | Issaquah School District School Bus Levy | YES | YES | YES |

While I love our libraries, KCLS Proposition 1 is asking for a tax hike at the worst possible time for homeowners. As property values increased over the past decade, Initiative 747 has kicked in to limit the growth of collections to 1 percent annually. Even with the corrections from last year, returning to the highest allowed levy rate of 50 cents per $1000 of assessed valuation now means homes valued at $500,000 will pay an extra $70 in 2011 and beyond. Like Seattle Public Library and everyone else, KCLS needs to cut costs to live within their current budget.

In contrast, the Issaquah School District is not asking for a tax increase, but a replacement of expiring levies. Over the next four years, average homeowners will still contribute the same amount or fewer tax dollars to local schools than they currently do if all three levies are renewed. Issaquah schools continue to deliver some of the best standardized test scores in the nation while having the lowest administrative overhead of any school in King County. However, given the $7.3M in state reductions last year and the ongoing cuts anticipated for at least the next two years, Issaquah School District has dropped in per-pupil funding from 271 to 282 of 295 districts and is becoming increasingly dependent on local taxes to maintain services. Local levies are no longer just for “enhancements”; they pay for 30% of our teachers, 60% of our non-certificated staff, and 50% of our transportation. Until the state can step up to fully funding basic education, we need to continue our local commitment to invest in schools.

If you haven’t voted yet, I would encourage you to make use of all available resources to complete your ballot and drop it at the Post Office by 6pm on Tuesday, February 9th. If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me.

Chad Magendanz

HAAS Precinct Committee Officer (R)

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Upcoming Events

**HAAS GOP Precinct Caucus**

*When*: **February 13, 2010, 10:00am – 11:30am**

*Where*: **Tahoma Jr. High** (25600 Summit Landsburg Rd., Ravensdale WA)

*Note*: To be eligible for election as a delegate or alternate to the King County convention, you must be a registered voter in the HAAS precinct. However, you don’t have to be present at the caucus to be nominated.