



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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June 28, 2016

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
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From: Sachi A. Hamai
Chief Executive Officer

POLLING RESULTS FOR POTENTIAL ONGOING REVENUE TO ADDRESS THE HOMELESS CRISIS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY (ITEM NO. 14, AGENDA OF FEBRUARY 23, 2016)

On February 23, 2016, the Board of Supervisors instructed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to explore options to increase revenue dedicated specifically to address Los Angeles County's homeless crisis. The Board also directed the CEO to conduct polling and research activities to inform the Board as to the optimum timing of when the various revenue options, if authorized, should be submitted for voter approval and how it should be crafted to ensure efficacy, transparency, accountability and the highest likelihood of passage; and to further clarify the full impacts that are being considered for the November 2016 ballot and take into consideration local and state initiatives and any additional local measures.

On March 9, 2016, the CEO provided an interim report to the Board on various potential ongoing revenue options to combat homelessness and the status of associated polling efforts. On April 22, 2016, the CEO provided a report on the polling results for the potential revenue options for the November 2016 election.

To provide additional information to the Board, an additional poll regarding November 2016 revenue options was conducted from June 18-25, 2016. A separate poll regarding potential revenue options for a possible March 2017 County special election was conducted during the same time period. The results of both of these polls are attached.

Please let me know if you have any questions, or your staff may contact Phil Ansell, Director, Homeless Initiative at pansell@ceo.lacounty.gov or 213-974-1752.

SAH:JJ:FAD
PA:ef

Attachment

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel

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Survey Results: Los Angeles County Homeless Revenue Options for November 2016 Ballot and Potential March 2017 Ballot

Summary

Separate telephone surveys among likely November 2016¹ and March 2017² Los Angeles County electorates show broad support for most potential funding mechanisms tested to pay for a homelessness measure.

Among the November 2016 special taxes tested—which require a two-thirds supermajority of support for passage—both the 10% sales tax on marijuana and the 3 cent parcel tax reached the two-thirds support level for passage before any positive or negative messages were shared. However, these support levels are just barely at or over the two-thirds threshold and are within the survey’s margin of error. None of the March 2017 special taxes cleared the supermajority hurdle.

A one-quarter percent increase in a general sales tax—which, along with an advisory measure, requires a majority of support for passage—earned well over the majority of support necessary for passage among both electorates; a combined homelessness and parks measure was tested for November '16 and a homelessness only measure was tested for March '17.

Initial Response

November 2016 Options							
Funding Mechanism	Tax Type	Required Vote	Required Supervisors	Measure	Support	Oppose	Undecided
10% Sales Tax on Recreational Marijuana	Special	67%	3	Homelessness	69	22	9
3 cent per sq ft parcel tax	Special	67%	3	Homelessness	67	24	9
3 cent per sq ft parcel tax	Special	67%	3	Parks	71	19	10
6 cent per sq ft parcel tax	Special	67%	3	Homelessness and Parks	62	27	11
¼ percent sales tax	General	50%	4	Homelessness and Parks	69	23	8

The margin of error for each option is ±3.6%

March 2017 Options							
Funding Mechanism	Tax Type	Required Vote	Required Supervisors	Measure	Support	Oppose	Undecided
10% Sales Tax on Recreational Marijuana	Special	67%	3	Homelessness	56	40	4
3 cent per sq ft parcel tax	Special	67%	3	Homelessness	33	60	7
3 cent per sq ft parcel tax	Special	67%	3	Parks	62	32	6
½ cent millionaires tax	Special	67%	3	Homelessness	59	37	4
¼ percent sales tax	General	50%	4	Homelessness	58	30	2

The margin of error for each option is ±3.6%

¹ David Binder Research conducted n=3000 live telephone interviews with likely November, 2016 general election voters in Los Angeles County. Interviews were conducted on June 18-26, 2016. Expected margin of sampling error is ±1.8% with a 95% confidence level overall. Each measure was asked with n=750 interviews, with a ±3.6 expected margin of sampling error each. The margin of error on sub-samples is greater.

² David Binder Research conducted n=750 live telephone interviews with likely March, 2017 election voters in Los Angeles County. Interviews were conducted on June 18-26, 2016. Expected margin of sampling error is ±3.6 with a 95% confidence level. The margin of error on sub-samples is greater.

After voters hear both positive and negative messaging on potential November '16 measures—simulating a campaign environment—support drops for each funding mechanism, leaving the general ¼ percent sales tax as the only homelessness measure to still earn enough support for passage.

After Positive and Negative Messaging

November 2016 Options							
Funding Mechanism	Tax Type	Required Vote	Required Supervisors	Measure	Support	Oppose	Undecided
10% Sales Tax on Recreational Marijuana	Special	67%	3	Homelessness	64	29	7
3 cent per sq ft parcel tax	Special	67%	3	Homelessness	61	34	5
3 cent per sq ft parcel tax	Special	67%	3	Parks	67	27	6
6 cent per sq ft parcel tax	Special	67%	3	Homelessness and Parks	61	31	8
¼ percent sales tax	General	50%	4	Homelessness and Parks	60	32	8
<i>The margin of error for each option is ±3.6%</i>							

Positive and negative messages were not provided to respondents in the March 2017 poll.

Recommendation by David Binder Research

Only the measures using a general tax with an advisory question confidently surpass the necessary majority vote thresholds for passage, while all special tax measures tested have difficulty clearing the necessary two-thirds vote threshold, both before and after messaging.

Therefore, DBR recommends moving forward with a general tax measure accompanied by an advisory question, with either a sales tax, which tested well as a general tax, or a tax on recreational marijuana, which tested well as a special tax, and would likely retain majority support as a general tax.