

VOTER INFORMATION PAMPHLET

MEASURES, ANALYSES AND ARGUMENTS

(whichever is applicable to your ballot)

Arguments in support of, or in opposition to, the proposed laws are the opinions of the authors.

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

K

Repeal of County Emergency Response Fee. Shall the County's Emergency Response Fee Ordinance, Chapter 4.28 of the Santa Cruz County Code, be repealed.

FULL TEXT OF BALLOT MEASURE K

AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ REPEALING CHAPTER 4.28 OF THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CODE IMPOSING AN EMERGENCY RESPONSE FEE

The people of the County of Santa Cruz ordain as follows:

SECTION I

Chapter 4.28 of the Santa Cruz County Code, imposing an Emergency Response Fee, is repealed.

SECTION II

The County of Santa Cruz shall not impose any fee for the improvements to and/or the use or operation of the 911 communication system based upon subscription to telephone services and/or based upon the consumption, subscription and/or use of natural gas, electricity, telephone, sewer, or cable television services.

SECTION III

If any provision of this measure is found to be invalid, that invalidity shall not effect the remaining portions of this measure.

IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS BY COUNTY COUNSEL MEASURE K

Effect of this Measure on Existing Law

This initiative measure proposes the repeal of the existing emergency response fee of the County of Santa Cruz, and would prohibit the County from adopting any future emergency response fee (unless approved by the voters). The County emergency response fee funds the County's share of costs for constructing, equipping and operating the county-wide emergency communication system to provide emergency call receiving and dispatching services (the 911 system). The fee is imposed pursuant to County Code Chapter 4.28 on telephone bills of customers within the County's unincorporated area. The emergency response fee is generally \$1.47 per month per access line or \$11.07 per trunk line charged to each customer who maintains access to the 911 system by subscribing to local telephone service within the unincorporated area of the County. Chapter 4.28 provides a maximum monthly charge of \$7.35 per month per residential customer, \$14.70 per month per business location and \$33.09 per month per trunk subscriber. Chapter 4.28 exempts lifeline customers and customers aged 62 or above from paying the emergency response fee for the 911 system.

Revenues collected by the emergency response fee must be used solely for the 911 system and may not be used for other governmental purposes.

Operation of Measure

A "YES" vote on Measure K is a vote to repeal the existing emergency response fee, and to prohibit the County from adopting any emergency response fee in the future unless approved by the voters.

A "NO" vote on Measure K is a vote to continue the existing County emergency response fee in effect.

Dated: August 17, 2004

s/ DANA McRAE
COUNTY COUNSEL

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT BY COUNTY AUDITOR-CONTROLLER MEASURE K

The Emergency Response Fee is restricted for the sole purpose of paying the County's share of cost for the "911" center (known as the Santa Cruz Consolidated Communication Center) on behalf of the County Sheriff. This fee cannot be used for any other purpose by ordinance and all monies are deposited into a separate fund.

A Yes Vote would repeal the County Emergency Response Fee resulting in an estimated loss of approximately \$1,525,000 on a fiscal year basis. This fee covers approximately 91% of the County's share of cost for operating the 911 Center on behalf of the Sheriff-Coroner and other emergency responders.

The fee is \$1.47 per month per residential phone line with a maximum of \$7.35 per month for 5 or more phone lines per household. The fee ranges from \$11.03 to \$33.09 per month for businesses with trunk lines and other businesses are capped at \$14.70 per month. You can easily determine the annual cost for your household or business. Lifeline customers, coin operated phones, public school systems are exempt and recent changes also make seniors over 62 eligible for exemption. This fee does not apply to cellular phones.

Respectfully Submitted,
s/ Gary A. Knutson, Auditor-Controller

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ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE K

You will probably only call 911 once in your life... but when you do, every second will count.

The men and women who serve in law enforcement, as firefighters, and as paramedics will be there at a moment's notice, but only if the 911 Emergency Response System is the best it can be.

The 911 Emergency Response Fee is a dedicated funding source that can only be used to fund the 911 Communications System. It cannot be used for any other government expense.

Without the 911 Emergency Response Fee, there will be service reductions and fewer 911 dispatch operators to answer your calls. Fewer 911 dispatch operators mean that calls will take longer to respond to, and precious moments will be lost. The 911 Emergency Response system cannot operate at its current high standard if the 911 Emergency Response Fee is repealed.

What if:

You wake up in the middle of the night and smell smoke. You call 911 and get put on hold;

Or —

You are awakened by the sound of an intruder in your home and call 911, and the phone rings and rings and rings.

And consider the expense and trauma that would result if a first responder could not be there for you, such as:

- The cost of replacing your burned-out home — \$\$
- The cost of hospitalization from a medical emergency — \$\$
- The cost of restoring your vandalized property — \$\$

And most importantly,

- The cost of losing a life that could have been saved.

The 911 Emergency Response Fee is a small price to pay for the safety and security of you and your family.

Support public safety. Vote No on Measure K.

s/ Mark Tracy, Sheriff-Coroner, County of Santa Cruz

s/ Gary W. Smith, Fire Chief (retired) - Aptos -La Selva Fire Protection District and Watsonville Fire Department

s/ Terry B. Lapid, M.D., Medical Director, Emergency Services, Dominican Hospital

s/ Betsy McCarty, Chief of Public Health, Santa Cruz County Health Services

AMR Paramedics

s/ David Zenker, Paramedic, Director of Operations

NO ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE K WAS FILED.