VOTE NO ON NEW TAXES

On the General Election ballot, voters will be asked to vote on an important Constitutional Amendment that reads: "Shall the legislature be authorized to establish, as provided by law, a surcharge on investment real property to support public education?"

The Chamber strongly opposes this NEW tax on real property and encourages you to vote NO for the following reasons:

- Will raise the cost of living for everyone.
- Will increase the cost of doing business.
- Will impact affordable housing and increase rent.
- Will increase taxes on ALL properties, including residential, commercial and agricultural. The home you own or rent, or the business you lease space for, could all face increases.
- No guarantee the monies will go as the proponents say, where is the proof? If Hawaii’s per pupil spending is above the national average, yet the classrooms are ill-equipped as the proponents say, where is the money going?

The business community has and continues to provide resources to our public education system in support of schools, teachers and students. What we are against is a law that will create a new tax that will increase the cost of living for everyone.

The Chamber wholeheartedly supports public education. As a proud K-12 public school graduate, I know how much my teachers meant to me and how they’ve had a positive impact on my life. However, this amendment will have far-reaching implications that will impact everyone. Rather than approve a new tax on real property and pass an amendment that will impact everyone, we encourage an independent audit of the Department of Education. Hawaii is the only state where its own DOE audits itself. If Hawaii’s per pupil spending is above the national average, yet the classrooms are ill-equipped as the proponents say, where is the money going?

The business community has and continues to provide resources to our public education system in support of schools, teachers and students. What we are against is a law that will create a new tax that will increase the cost of living for everyone.

Berriane Kuenzeth
President, The Queen’s Hawai’i Office
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