



NEWS RELEASE

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No Permanent Tax. No on Issue 1 Responds to Arkansas Supreme Court Ruling on ArDOT Spending

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. – No Permanent Tax. No on Issue 1 today responded to the Arkansas Supreme Court ruling that would block the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ArDOT) from using revenue from the 2012 ten-year 0.5% sales tax on highway widening projects greater than four lanes. This ruling would impact the controversial seven-mile, billion-dollar widening of Interstate 30 in downtown Little Rock and North Little Rock currently being funded largely by revenue from the 0.5% sales tax.

No Permanent Tax. No on Issue 1 Chair Ryan Norris issued the following statement:

“This ruling by the Arkansas Supreme Court shows ArDOT has been misusing taxpayer dollars to fund large projects in Little Rock for years. ArDOT is currently under audit for wasteful spending and the court’s decision validates how unaccountable the transportation department has become by taking funds that should have gone to road maintenance and 4-lane highways across the state as it had promised the voters in 2012. Voting no on Issue 1 would bring some accountability back to the people and the people’s representatives.”

No Permanent Tax. No on Issue 1 Vice-Chair Joshua Silverstein issued the following statement:

“Yesterday, the Arkansas Supreme Court ruled 6-1 that ArDOT may not use revenue from the existing sales tax to pay for the I-30 Crossing project, as it planned to do (and 7-0 that ArDOT inappropriately used such sales tax revenue for the I-630 widening). Isn't it clear that ARDOT does not deserve another penny until the agency is brought under appropriate democratic controls? This is yet more compelling evidence that all Arkansans should vote against Issue 1.

"Because of the Arkansas Supreme Court decision, of the money to be raised by Issue 1 and used for new construction, ArDOT will have to spend roughly 16 years of that money to complete I-30. It is now beyond dispute that the impact of Issue 1 will be to take money from citizens from across this state and spend it all on a single 7 mile stretch in Little Rock and North Little Rock -- a project that all objective experts recognize is a breathtaking waste of money. That is quite simply absurd.

"And another unanswered question is how ArDOT will repay the 4-Lane Highway Fund for the illegally funded widening of Interstate 630 west of University Avenue. ArDOT owes voters an explanation on this as well," Silverstein concluded.

Downtown Neighborhood Association President Greg Henderson issued the following statement:

"This ruling confirms what we in the Downtown Neighborhood Association have known. The funds are being misused for years. Even more it is taking money away from rural areas of Arkansas to build projects in metropolitan areas that are overwhelmingly opposed by our residents. This is important not just for Little Rock, but for the entire state because rural areas will finally get the infrastructure improvements that they need and were promised to them. It also highlights even more the need to oppose Issue 1, because it removes the restrictions against urban development. ArDOT has shown they will continue to develop metropolitan freeways and ignore the needs of rural Arkansas when given a chance."

Background:

[No Permanent Tax. No on Issue 1](#) is a Legislative Question Committee set up under Arkansas Law to oppose Issue 1 on Tuesday, November 3.

The No Permanent Tax. No on Issue 1 committee is composed of 14 Arkansas organizations representing low and moderate income Arkansans, environmental groups, labor unions, the Arkansas Libertarian Party and Americans for Prosperity united in the belief that Arkansas needs a fairer, more specific and smarter plan for road and highway maintenance in the state.

Paid for by Americans for Prosperity. Authorized by No Permanent Tax. No on Issue One.