

IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS BY CITY ATTORNEY— MEASURE S

If adopted by a majority of City of Sonoma voters, this measure will enact legislation (an ordinance amending Section 3.16.030 of the Sonoma Municipal Code) increasing the transient occupancy tax (“tax”), also generally known as a “hotel tax,” for the purpose of increasing revenues to assist the City in maintaining and enhancing the financial resources of the City to provide services and maintain infrastructure.

The City of Sonoma currently imposes a hotel tax at the rate of ten percent (10%) of the rent paid by guests for the privilege of renting hotel rooms or other lodging places in the City on a short-term basis of thirty (30) consecutive days or less. This measure would increase the tax to twelve percent (12%) of the rent beginning January 1, 2019 and, in addition, allow the city council to increase the tax to thirteen percent (13%) by or before January 1, 2024.

The entire increase in the hotel tax shall be used for City general fund purposes to be spent only in the City of Sonoma. The tax revenues collected through this measure could be used for such purposes as: police and fire services, emergency preparedness, streets, parks, open space, and recreation, and affordable/workforce housing, among other uses.

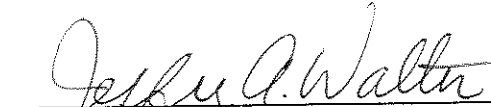
If the measure passes, the City would receive an estimated amount of \$750,000 in additional revenue on an annual basis beginning 2019, and then another estimated amount of \$375,000 in additional revenue on an annual basis if the City Council increases the TOT an additional one percent (1%) by January 1, 2024 in accordance with the measure (for an estimated total of \$1,125,000 annually with both increases).

Article XIII B of the California Constitution establishes a ceiling on local government appropriations. Section 4 of Article XIII B permits the voters to alter the appropriations limit by a majority vote. If approved by a majority of the voters, this measure would increase the appropriations limit in an amount equal to the increase in hotel tax revenues generated under this measure for Fiscal Years 2018/19 through 2021/22.

The proposed ordinance was placed on the ballot by the City Council.

Since the ordinance does not limit the City’s use of the revenue from the hotel tax it is a general tax. State law authorizes the City to implement this ordinance upon approval by a simple majority of voters who vote on the measure.

A “yes” vote would approve an increase in the transient occupancy tax rate to at least 12% and potentially 13%. A “no” vote would reject an increase in the transient occupancy tax rate to at least 12% and potentially 13%.


JEFFREY A. WALTER
CITY ATTORNEY

TO COUNTY ELECTIONS OFFICIALS:

IF THE ENTIRE TEXT OF THE MEASURE IS NOT PRINTED ON THE BALLOT, NOR IN THE VOTER INFORMATION GUIDE, PLEASE PRINT IMMEDIATELY BELOW MY IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS, AND ABOVE MY SIGNATURE BLOCK, IN NO LESS THAN 10-POINT BOLD TYPE THE FOLLOWING:

The above statement is an impartial analysis of Measure S. If you desire a copy of the measure, please call the elections official's office at 707 933 2216 and a copy will be mailed at no cost to you.