



## Proposition 1: Property Tax Levy For Retention of Basic Public Safety & Other Essential Services

### What is it and why is it needed?

Island County has depended upon sales tax revenue and interest income from investments to support basic services. When the national credit bubble burst, those revenues collapsed along with it. The revenues now available do not adequately fund essential services. Since 2008, \$4.2 million in expenses have been cut reducing government by over 60 positions across many departments to balance the budget. Currently, there are over 30 fewer employees funded by County Current Expense than 10 years ago in 2001.

In the years ahead, expected revenues will not support the current level of services and deeper cuts are needed which will impact our quality of life, and diminish the county's ability to provide for public safety. In response, the Board of County Commissioners placed Proposition 1 on the August ballot to provide stable funding for public safety and other essential services.

**What does that mean to me?** As an example, properties valued at \$250,000, Proposition 1 could increase the property owner's 2011 taxes by approximately **\$40** (forty dollars) **per year**, or \$3 - \$4 per month. The levy cannot increase by more than the CPI for each of the following four years. The levy lid lift could increase property taxes by 3% for the average Island County homeowner. This will provide an additional \$2 million for county services and stabilize county revenues. The current drop in property values may cause some taxpayers to not experience an increase in their 2011 tax bills.

**Doesn't Island County collect enough property taxes already?** Of the property taxes you pay, only 7% goes to the County's Current Expense fund which is used to fund essential services such as courts, jails, public health nurses, and general government services. This is the only fund impacted by Proposition 1.

**What services will be affected if Proposition 1 doesn't pass?** The passage of Proposition 1 will stabilize the present level of law and justice, nursing services, and other public safety programs to meet the needs of our community. Island County's essential services will be significantly reduced in 2011 without an increase to the Current Expense levy. Proposition 1 will be on your August primary ballot to address this issue. What is at risk is our ability to **continue the basics** – fiscally responsible audit and financial accountability programs, provide adequate staff so that properties are accurately assessed in a timely manner, protect drinking water, respond to public health emergencies, and continue providing 24-hour police protection.

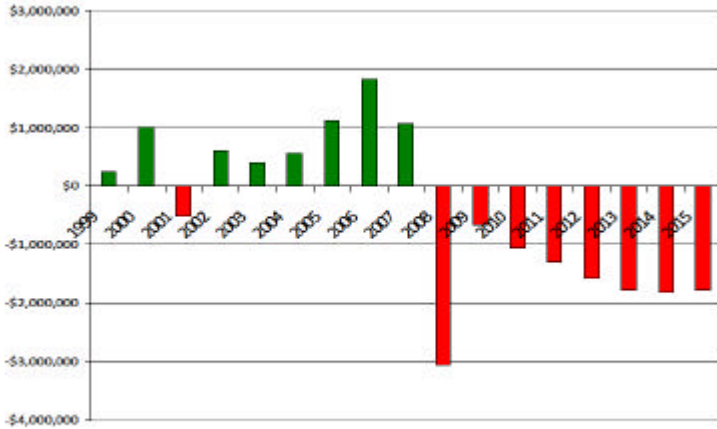
For more information visit:  
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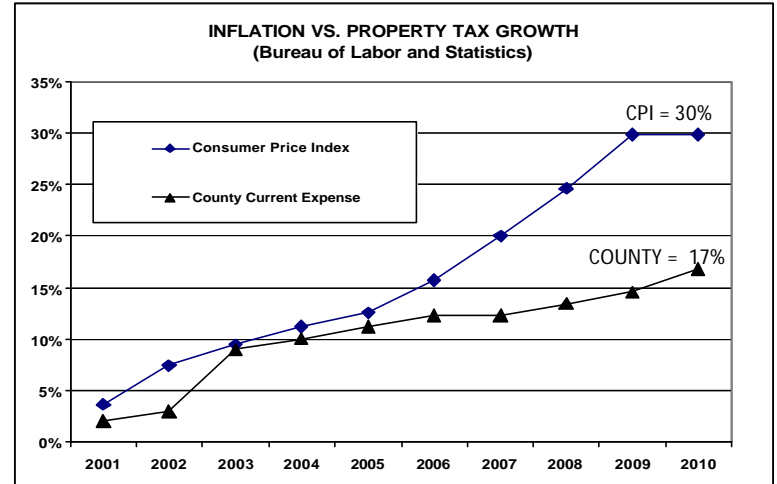
# Proposition 1: What is it and why is it needed?

A modest increase in the Current Expense levy can provide the necessary funding to support basic levels of public safety and other essential services. Should the ballot measure fail, severe impacts to Law and justice, public health, services for children and seniors will be unavoidable.

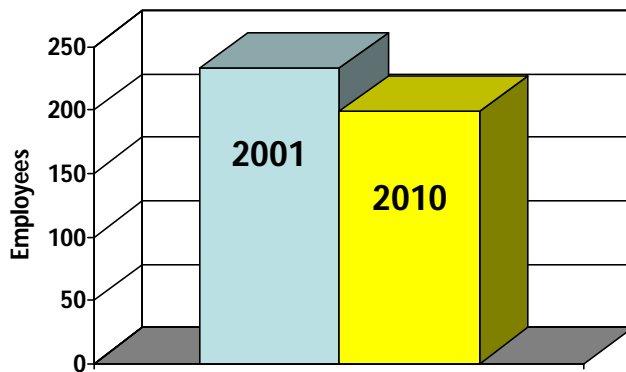
## COUNTY CURRENT EXPENSE 5 YEAR OUTLOOK REVENUES *minus* EXPENDITURES



## INFLATION OUTPACED ALLOWABLE PROPERTY TAX INCREASES



## FEWER CURRENT EXPENSE EMPLOYEES IN 2010 THAN 10 YEARS AGO



## STEPS TAKEN TO REDUCE COSTS 2008 - NOW

- ✂ Reduced spending by \$4.2 million
- ✂ Cut over 60 employees
- ✂ Donated 10% of Commissioners' pay
- ✂ Other elected officials made donations
- ✂ Health insurance benefits cut
- ✂ Reduced energy usage by \$50,000
- ✂ 140 union employees take unpaid furlough hours

## 2010 COUNTY CURRENT EXPENSE DISTRIBUTION BY PROGRAM

Because Law & Justice makes up well over half of the Current Expense Budget, another \$2 million reduction (-10%) means additional reductions in Law & Justice programs.

