

SOUTH METRO FIRE RESCUE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

RESOLUTION NO. 23-09

RESOLUTION ADVOCATING VOTER OPPOSITION TO PROPOSITION HH

WHEREAS, the South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District (“District”) is a quasi-municipal corporation and political subdivision of the State of Colorado operating pursuant to Article 1, Title 32, C.R.S., for the purpose of providing fire protection and rescue services; and

WHEREAS, Proposition HH: Reduce Property Taxes and Retain State Revenue (“Proposition HH”) will appear on the statewide ballot in the November 7, 2023 General Election, as set forth in Senate Bill 23-303; and

WHEREAS, if Proposition HH passes, Senate Bill 23-303 of the Colorado General Assembly will take effect lowering property taxes owed, allowing the State to keep additional money that would otherwise be refunded to taxpayers, temporarily changing how taxpayer TABOR refunds are distributed, and creating a new property tax limit for most local governments; and

WHEREAS, property taxes account for over 80% of the District’s revenues; and

WHEREAS, the District’s property tax revenues will already be reduced approximately \$6.85M through the assessed value reductions enacted in SB21-293 and SB22-238, and the market value reductions enacted by the Douglas County Assessor; and

WHEREAS, Proposition HH’s new property classes, market value reductions, assessment rate reductions, limited backfill, and revenue limits will further reduce the District’s property tax revenues about \$5M to \$15M in budget year 2024 and up to \$8M in future years, along with uncertain long-term impacts through 2032 and beyond; and

WHEREAS, reductions in the District’s property tax revenue challenge its ability to provide high-quality fire, ambulance, medical, and other emergency and life safety services, including significant investments in service expansion to new development, construction and maintenance of facilities and infrastructure, purchase of fire apparatus and critical equipment, salary and benefits, and other investments greatly impacted by inflation and supply chain disruptions over the past three years; and

WHEREAS, Proposition HH’s property tax reductions will have a significant impact on fire service agencies throughout Colorado, some of which are neighbors and mutual aid partners of the District, which limits the ability to provide the most effective, regional response to wildfires and other significant emergency incidents; and

WHEREAS, while the District has taken previous bold actions to improve service, reduce costs, and support long-term financial stability by consolidating several fire agencies, achieving accreditation through the Center for Public Safety Excellence, reducing insurance premiums for many taxpayers by achieving an Insurance Services Office (ISO) Class 1 rating, and maintaining its voter-approved mill levy of 9.25 mills since 2004, one of the lowest mill levies in Colorado for career fire districts; and

WHEREAS, while the District understands the financial burden that the sharp rise in property values may create, the District and its citizens should determine the appropriate property tax revenues to collect, rather than a statewide policy that doesn't account for local circumstances; and

WHEREAS, the Colorado Fair Campaign Practices Act authorizes local governments to adopt resolutions in support of or opposition to ballot issues, and it is the desire of the Board of Directors of the District to express its opposition to Proposition HH; and

WHEREAS, the Colorado Fair Campaign Practices Act also authorizes local governments to distribute in normal fashion an adopted Resolution regarding any ballot issue of importance to that local government;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District that the Board hereby expresses its strongest possible opposition to Proposition HH; and the voters of the District are encouraged to **vote "NO"** on Proposition HH at the November 7, 2023 General Election; and further confirms that, if passed, Proposition HH will threaten to impair the District's ability to provide the same level of emergency response and life safety services and facilities that it currently provides.

ADOPTED this 16th day of October 2023

SOUTH METRO FIRE RESCUE FIRE
PROTECTION DISTRICT

By: 
Jim Albee, Chairman

Attest:


Sue Roche, Secretary