



ARIZONA FIRE DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

Guidance: Tax Rate Cap Override Election

The Arizona State Legislature passed Senate Bill 1244 last session, which provides a process for fire districts to obtain TEMPORARY relief from the 3.25 tax rate cap to a maximum tax rate of 3.50 with local voter approval. The tax rate override if approved by the local electorate is for a five-year term. The temporary tax rate cap relief was provided through “Session Law”, which means the law allowing the tax rate cap override will repeal at a specified date (*in this case – December 31, 2017*).

S1244 allowed two opportunities for fire districts to ask their respective voters for tax rate cap relief: November 2016 and November 2017 general elections.

NOTE: The November 7, 2017 General Election is the final opportunity for fire districts to place the tax rate cap override question on the ballot.

The Arizona Fire District Association Board of Directors has prepared general guidance to assist fire districts considering a tax rate cap override measure for the November 7, 2017 General Election Ballot.

Tax Rate Cap Override Elections - Important / Time Sensitive Items to Consider

- ✓ Deadlines in preparing for the tax rate cap override ballot measure are rapidly approaching. It is essential to begin preparing now. Completed ballot text and other administrative items are generally required to be filed 120 days prior to the election (*July 10, 2017*).

- ✓ Contact your County Election Office for specific direction and deadlines. Each county may have different requirements / deadlines for submitting documents; some as early as June 2017.



ARIZONA FIRE DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

- ✓ One of the required documents is a resolution approved by the fire district's Governing Board reflecting the district's intent to place the measure on the ballot. This item should be placed on your Governing Board meeting agenda at your earliest opportunity.

- ✓ Contact your County Recorder's Office. Both the Recorder's Office and the County Elections Office *will charge fees for placing the tax rate cap override measure on the ballot*. The fee is generally based on the number of registered voters. This information will be necessary for your FY 2017 / 2018 budget development.

- ✓ Consult with your fire district attorney, or your county attorney, for approval of the ballot language. Do so at your earliest opportunity as the review time can be extensive (*please see sample ballot language document on the AFDA website*).

AFDA has posted information to the website (www.azfiredistricts.org) which includes a checklist for various benchmarks and documents necessary for a tax rate cap override election. The materials were developed by Fire Chief Gary Morris, Pine Strawberry Fire District and Fire Chief Paul Bourgeois, Superstition Fire and Medical District. Both Chiefs led their respective fire districts through successful tax rate cap override elections at the November 2016 General Election (*the ballot measures passed with 67% and 58% voter approval respectfully*).

In addition to the checklist, information available on the AFDA website includes sample ballot language, a sample resolution, a copy of a post card that Pine Strawberry Fire District sent to all residents (*at a cost of \$0.07 cents each to mail*), a sample voter education pamphlet, a PowerPoint program which Pine Strawberry used at public meetings, a copy of two PowerPoint's delivered at the January AFDA Conference in Laughlin (*one from Pine Strawberry and the other from Superstition*).



ARIZONA FIRE DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

Tax Rate Cap Override Elections Information on AFDA website: www.azfiredistricts.org

- Ballot Measure Checklist
- Sample Ballot Language
- Sample Governing Board Resolution
- Sample Voter Information Pamphlet
- Pine Strawberry Fire District – Public Meeting PowerPoint
- Superstition Fire and Medical District PowerPoint
- Primary Consultants (*Paul Ulan – Elections Consultant*) PowerPoint
- Thank you - notice
- Public Notice Post Card (*PSFD*)

Additional information and insight may be obtained by contacting Chief Morris and Chief Bourgeois:

- Chief Morris - 928-476-4272
- Chief Bourgeois - 480-982-4440

Fire districts may also wish to consult with an elections / ballot measure consultant. Paul Ulan has assisted several fire districts in the November 2016 General Election. Mr. Ulan has extensive experience with city, county and school district ballot measures and elections.

- Paul Ulan - 602-294-0700