

Memo to: George Foote, Chairman
Mark Feldheim
Lois Walker
John Renner
Paul Friedman

Copy to: The Mayor, City Council

From: Bud Miller
President, Alexandria Taxpayers United

Date: February 14, 2008

Subject: Petition to City Council regarding proposed commercial property taxes



Alexandria Taxpayers United
www.atuonline.org

I have attached a copy of a petition signed by 180 Alexandria business owners and Residents as of February 13, 2008 opposing proposals to increase commercial property taxes. (You can verify the text and observe any new signatures via our web site at www.atuonline.org.)

The petition reads as follows:

We urge Alexandria City Council members NOT to increase commercial property taxes.

Increasing commercial property taxes will drive away new and established businesses as they search for friendlier jurisdictions. Alexandria shouldn't be chasing off the good local jobs attached to these businesses.

Alexandria's unique economy, especially the small independent businesses concentrated in Del Ray and Old Town, will be inordinately damaged by another tax increase in these economically challenging times.

Should the City Council increase commercial property taxes, Alexandria consumers will face the prospect of higher prices as businesses pass along the costs. Higher prices will especially hurt low-income and less-mobile residents who have a harder time shopping around for lower-priced goods.

Alexandria can capitalize on the recent commercial property tax increases in some other Northern Virginia localities by simply keeping the current tax rate the same. This will naturally drive business and consumers to Alexandria. The City's leaders can use this opportunity to foster a reputation for Alexandria as the most pro-business jurisdiction in Northern Virginia.

Please, protect our small businesses and consumers by rejecting any increase in the commercial property tax.

Sincerely, The Undersigned

- 1 David M. Martin
 - 2 Bud Miller
 - 3 Kristina Rasmussen
 - 4 MARCIA MILLER
 - 5 Duane Parde
 - 6 Keith Capp
 - 7 Douglas Frank
 - 8 Mary Vetter
 - 9 Natasha Altamirano
 - 10 Audrey Mullen
 - 11 Maureen Schantz
 - 12 Calvert S. Whitehurst
 - 13 Sanford D. Horn
 - 14 William L. Fey
 - 15 Andrew Moylan
 - 16 Bill Peabody
 - 17 Torger Anderson
 - 18 Dusty Gulleson
 - 19 Dan Gainor
 - 20 Robert L King : MSR Inc
 - 21 Sunita Satyapal
 - 22 TJ Parmele
 - 23 Bernie Schulz
 - 24 annabelle fisher
 - 25 Sam Batkins
 - 26 Donald L. Mikovch
 - 27 Paul Frederick Birckner
 - 28 Douglas C. Mills
 - 29 Diane G. Murphy
 - 30 Drew Nordgren
- good business is to have appropriate taxation
- City Council: Please give Alexandria Small Businesses a chance. Don't raise our taxes again.
- please do not raise taxes, it will hurt us..
- Be responsible and cut spending.
- Don't raise already-high property tax rates and harm the small businesses that make Alexandria unique. RE is already dying
- Haven't Alexandria taxes gone up enough? Do we need another trillion-dollar school building somewhere?
Enough is enough
- Enough is enough. What IS it with this Board? They can't seem to curb spending, the schools are in the toilet, and now they want to increase taxes on businesses here? Let FFX and Arlington counties raise their taxes and let Alexandria benefit from the relocation
Stop the madness of passing legislation that continues to make Alexandria unfriendly to businesses.
- As a resident and business in Alexandria, i am against any increase in commercial property tax in Alexandria.
- DON'T DO IT!!

- 31 Craig Miller
- 32 Lisa De Pasquale
- 33 Marci Weis
- 34 Brendan Steinhauser
- 35 Lauren Daugherty

I thought we were trying to FOSTER new business

please...enough is enough!!

- 36 Robert Crockett
- 37 Kent Lassman
- 38 Allison Kasic
- 39 John Varghese
- 40 Mike Anderson
- 41 Diane Miller
- 42 Edward N. Brown
- 43 Sara Salupo
- 44 Laurie Wirth
- 45 Timothy Lee
- 46 Melissa Moskal

Lower taxes comparable to other local jurisdictions will drive business to Alexandria, not away!!!

The Westin East Management Company

May have to vote for a Republican candidate the next election if you keep raising taxes. Try curbing spending for a change, like stopping the Safe Haven program on Patrick. That alone will save a half million in "taxpayer" money for people who don't pay taxes, an annual cost that is guaranteed to exceed a million in just a few years. Your nice-to-have social programs are going to be the end of an Old Town Alexandria that took three decades to create. Or perhaps you want Old Town to return to the shadows again? Why don't you increase the parking police staff and focus on all Old Town streets, not just those with meters around King Street. Raising taxes for businesses and residents while ignoring a cash cow is just plain ignorant of fiscal realities and financial potential.

- 47 Joseph E. Davis
- 48 Gwendolyn Jo M. Carlberg
- 49 Center for Individual Freedom

50 Scott C. Humphrey
51 Lynne Weigle-Snow
52 Mark A. Potter

53 Troy Englert
54 Debra Monahan
55 Pat Dunn
56 Eric Hilleman
57 ISABEL MOSQUERA
58 Rodrigo Restrepo
59 Alonso Castano
60 Henrik Rasmussen

61 Sandra Levy
62 Katia Miniovich
63 Iris Henley
64 Dina Clevenson
65 Sheri Bergen
66 Linda Lloyd
67 Nearman Financial Consulting Inc.

68 Steve Nearman
69 Lynne Reid

70 Angela Cannon
71 Sharon Shoch
72 Jody Manor
73 Pamela Prevar

74 Pete Sepp

I find this to be a discriminating Tax. Will not be a good message for attracting new business. I think as a business that supports all kinds of city endeavors I will reduce all charitable contributions in an amount equal to the amount of the discriminatory tax. Of course I will explain that City Council is responsible for my reduced contributions.

New business in old town this could jeopardize the business.

Please don't make taxes higher
Keep taxes down!

I am a resident and business owner, and an increase would hurt my business. You can raise taxes, but we cannot raise prices and remain competitive. Our employees, who work on commission, would surely suffer.

30% is really excessive and not in anybody's best interests here
TOO HIGH FOR SMALL BUSINESSES NOW!
With the new Harbor about to open across the river Alexandria needs to do ALL IT CAN to sustain the viability of its small businesses.

I hope elected officials will stop trying to play these kinds of shell games. "Taxing businesses" means taxing people!

75 Troy Clayton
76 Gail McCurry
77 Dan Hazelwood

As I have seen over the years, if property values go up, the city takes the increased taxes, and spends more. If the property values go down, or remain flat, the city puts up the tax rate and spends more. It is time for a responsible budget, without undue burden on business.

78 Mary Longacre
79 Eileen Cross

The city can raise additional revenues from its commercial base by making this a MORE business friendly environment, supporting existing businesses by helping them increase revenues, which will increase BPOL tax collections - everybody wins. If you raise the property tax rate, rents will go up, and more small businesses will be forced to close - everybody loses!

80 Lamar Brown

This increase will hurt small business owners such as myself.

81 Kyle Roberts
82 L. Lauritzen

I agree with this petition. The city has enough funds to function. I will have to move my business to avoid these taxes.

83 Richard Geiger
84 Paul Winn
85 Alise Frye
86 LEO SALOM
87 John Wirth
88 John W. Britten III

I would have to move my private business office outside of Alexandria if the proposal is adopted.

89 Beth Aberg

We are heading into a downturn now is NOT the time to be raising any costs on businesses.

90 Steve Aberg

Do not increase business costs as we head into an economic downturn.

91 Andre Prue
92 Richard Gallagher
93 Dr Julia Wray
94 sheila mc gurk
95 Joe Miller
96 Lesley Golenor
97 Chris Sigg
98 Marianne Stonefield

A raise this high is likely to put my business out on the street.

Reside at 208 S. Henry Street, Alexandria

99 Catherine Kyriacou Bradford
100 Stephen Harvey

Don't increase taxes...Parking is very difficult in Alexandria....Very few shoppers in town...Christmas business is very slow

101 Ronald Battocchi

Alexandria businesses offer good value, but price increases will likely make them less competitive.

102 Kent Scholla
103 Adrien Cotton
104 Eleanor Krause

As a business owner that is considering expansion to downtown DC, Bethesda, Chicago and even New York City, Alexandria has some of the highest costs my team has encountered (even when compared to New York City). Please reconsider this strategy. As the economy stutters and City Hall raises taxes, subsequent price increases from merchants will cause consumers to re-think spending their discretionary income in Alexandria, not to mention making it harder to attract solid businesses to our neighborhood.

105 Ginger Mickelson
106 Thomas P. Silis

As a member of PWBA and a Del Ray business owner, please think twice about raising commercial property taxes. It hurts the landlords who've invested in Alexandria and when passed on to us, hurts business. If my rent is increased up to 30%, it will affect prices to consumers and commissions to my contractors. I may even have to move my business elsewhere.

107 Robert Tillman
108 Jonathan Rick
109 Heather Grutzius

When you think of that mom & pop store on the corner that has been there since you were a child, when you think of the community that thrives around & because of these shops, when you think of the centuries of Old Town built on the shoulders of independent retailers struggling to provide a service for their community and etch out a living for themselves in the process.... when you think of them, understand that taxes like this will be sure to thank them for all of their hard work by putting them out of business. Bravo!

110 Manorama Andrea Rakhmanov
111 Craig Shirley
112 Paul S. Stevens

I work for a small business called Alexandria Myotherapy Inc. We are a low-profit business and an increase to our rent could adversely affect our business.

113 Meredith Ellsworth
114 Gary Schleuger
115 Brent M. Eastwood
116 Lisa Miller
117 Stephen E. Dreikorn

Additional business costs just get passed on to consumers--

118 Collin Lee

Commercial taxes are simply passed on to the consumer in the form of higher prices. Please don't raise Alexandria's prices, slow spending, and chase our business and jobs to other localities. NO NEW TAXES, drive business away and you drive away prosperity for all!

119 Janette L. Scott
120 Jennifer Smith
121 Scott McCandless
122 Shaun McGee
123 maria penaloza
124 Roger Waud
125 Anthony Costanzo
126 roger kaplan

We have some small unique and quality shops that offer special service and merchandize. If they should have to leave because of tax increases then Alexandria will have less to offer both residents and citizens.

127 P. Ann Kaupp
128 Peggy Marchbanks
129 Rebecca Holian

Raising taxes runs counter to competing with National Harbor. High taxes will drive more businesses away, rather than encouraging them. Many in the past 20 years have left because of high taxes and other costs. We increasingly are an Old Town of restaurants and "tee shirts". Bad news. No class at all. Keep taxes low.

130 Gregory Ogden
131 Allison Wise

Call me as I can try to get more signitures 202-253-6900

132 Roger Fons
133 Jesse W. Biggers

134 Todd Healy

every one in city hall should lose their jobs!!!!

135 Creighton Byrnes

I own Diva Boutique on 116 S. Pitt St. and feel very strongly about the fact that we as a City need unique, small businesses to preserve the flavor of Alexandria. If small businesses are continually asked to be the ones ante-ing up, we are going to end up with a city of Walgreens, Gap Outlets and 9 west outlets. Not even mall-worthy stores. Please reconsider the idea of raising these taxes--look how many small businesses have gone out of business this year--the trend will sadly continue if we are hit with this along with all of the other City fees.

- 136 Cindy McCartney
- 137 michael Anderson
- 138 Jennifer Donohue
- 139 Meshelle Armstrong
- 140 Michael P Kirby
- 141 Jeremy Gersh
- 142 Jay Thomas
- 143 Carrie Ruggles
- 144 Angela Lorinchak

President Kwik Kopy Printing and Mailing

I agree - enough is enough!

Resident and business owner. Another tax hike. Alexandria is not a city that wants small business.

- 145 Steve Cann
- 146 Cecilia Guay
- 147 Amanda Lasker
- 148 matthew sellers
- 149 Rachel Hughey
- 150 DAVID A CHENAULT
- 151 Sarah Davis
- 152 Timothy Davis
- 153 Laura Shelton
- 154 Karen S. Stone
- 155 Jim Makinen
- 156 Erica Jones
- 157 Anthony Felli

Gossypia

- 158 Lynne Weigle-Snow
- 159 Scott Marchand

Increased commercial property tax is killing small businesses!

Prediction: City Council will proclaim success by holding the tax rate to its current level, while adopting the "add-on" commercial tax rate of at least \$.15 per hundred. There is no rationale for increasing real property taxes on commercial property only. After all, they don't require the infrastructure that residential development does, such as schools, parks, etc. In fact, commercial developments actually generate revenue. Perhaps we should take a hard look at cutting some spending, such as the budget for "refugee assistance" we have now.

160 Mark Allen

161 Rebecca Marchand

Small businesses already pay enough tax !

I own two townhouses in Alexandria City, one in Del Ray and one in Oldtown. I can't replace my air conditioner on my roof in Oldtown without a city permit. I pay high real estate taxes. I donate my time to charitable organizations, including the Alexandria Police Foundation. The only request I made of the City was to investigate a robbery that I had in my office by prior employees and the tPolice did nothing regardless of the fact that the employees admitted that they had files of mine. Fairfax City police had an arrest warrant issued for a client of mine in similiar circumstances. I think my area is quaint but what am I paying for ? If Alexandria raises its taxes, I am definately moving. The City needs to tighten their belt. We are already taxed for every pencil we own.

162 P. Elizabeth Pirsch

163 R.C. Fields Jr.

business license taxes on gross income is vicious and counterproductive towards business owners and the local economy.

164 Deborah Malkin

165 Andrew Hepburn

166 Michael H Huhn

If you are going to increase the commercial tax you should have the residential tax increase along with it and not discriminate against the businesses. With the state of the economy in 2008 we need ways to spend less money as opposed to increasing taxes. Many o f the local business are running on tight margins and a tax increase could send some business under and cause jobs to be lost.

167 Frank H. Fannon IV

168 Peter Mikoniatis

Fiscal responsibility means don't spend money you don't have; not tax someone because you doubt that they will vote against you since they "only" work in Alexandria.

169 John F. McGinley Jr.
170 John Crowder
171 George Crowder

Property taxes are passed on to the tenants of owners' buildings. Small business in Alexandria operate at 50% of the square footage take of our neighboring regions. Any additional tax could cause more unique businesses to close, thus lessening the charm that attracts visitors to the city.

172 Joseph M. Egerton
173 Stephen Baer

Don't raise the taxes! Our business is already considering whether or not it makes sense to be headquartered in Alexandria for this very reason. Find other ways to raise revenue other than taxing quality small local businesses.

174 Judith Baer
175 Ben Ward
176 Raphael Botbol

Does anyone really expect the Council, which always cries poverty, to practice restraint? Isn't a recession a great time to raise the cost of business? Be prepared to open your wallets as the Council doesn't know the meaning of restraint - except when it comes to depriving its citizens of economic prosperity. In a few years the city will wonder what happened to the small retailers.

177 John Henry Loomis
178 Wilhelmina T. Loomis

Alexandria cannot keep businesses as it is. Find ways to attract business, don't drive it away. Alexandria is justly known as an overpriced, bureaucratic nightmare.

179 Debra Sabourin
180 Michael Gaw