



TUSCARAWAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Commissioners Urge Voters to Oppose Issue 1 this November

During Monday's Commissioners Meeting on October 15th, 2018, the Board took time to encourage voters to oppose Issue 1. In attendance was Sheriff Orvis Campbell who also encouraged voters to oppose issue 1, noting that while Issue 1 does pull at heartstrings, the proposed issue simply does not make sense, and in fact will likely have the opposite impact as intended. Commissioner Abbuhl stated that is important to look at not only the overarching issue, but also the finer details of Issue 1. Commissioner Sciarretti added that while Issue 1 may have its roots in trying to lessen overcrowding in prisons, not punishing those who possess or deal dangerous drugs such as fentanyl would be a critical error in our state. Commissioner Metzger reflected on his time in the state legislature, noting that because Issue 1 is a proposed constitutional amendment, it will be nearly impossible to change the law as tweaks need made. Commissioner Metzger added that Issue 1 is modeled after California's Proposition 47, which studies show have failed in its original goals, and that the Ohio Office of Management and Budget recently issues a report showing that Issue 1 will fall approximately 70 to 80 million dollars short of its proposed 100 million dollar savings.

Following the discussion on Issue 1, the Tuscarawas County Board of Commissioners unanimously approved the following resolution in opposition of Issue 1:

WHEREAS, Ohio voters will be faced with voting on a proposed amendment to the Ohio Constitution known as State Issue 1 at the general election on November 6, 2018; and

WHEREAS, Tuscarawas County has proven and effective drug court programs. Our drug courts connect addicts to treatment and help motivate success. Many addicts forgo treatment entirely without the threat of imprisonment. Passage of State Issue 1 will eliminate effective treatment efforts in courts in Tuscarawas County and across the state; and

WHEREAS, Issue 1 mandates that the possession of Fentanyl, K2, Cocaine, LSD, Methamphetamines, Heroin, and other controlled substances be classified as a misdemeanor, not a felony, with mandatory probation resulting in lighter punishment than offences like disorderly conduct or reckless operation ; and

WHEREAS, with passage of State Issue 1, reducing felonies to misdemeanors would mean that drug laws in Ohio will be some of the more lenient in the country. Those results include exposing Ohioans to an increase in substance abuse activity and criminal behavior as there will be little to no consequence for engaging in such; and

WHEREAS, such lenient laws on lethal drugs will attract those with nefarious and criminal intentions to Tuscarawas County and the great state of Ohio; and

WHEREAS, State Issue 1 could impose a substantial unfunded mandate upon Tuscarawas County, which would be obligated to pay for the treatment services mandated by its provisions. The funding mechanism proposed in State Issue 1 would either not be realized or insufficient to meet the



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constitutionally obligated demand for services that would be placed upon counties placing a financial burden on Tuscarawas County taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, Tuscarawas County would incur significant costs for the court proceedings necessary to comply with Issue 1's retroactive application that would require courts to re-sentence and/or release any individual convicted of an offense of possessing, obtaining or using drugs; and

WHEREAS, the additional misdemeanor classifications will further financially burden Tuscarawas County and other counties in Ohio already faced with significant funding reductions; and

WHEREAS, by placing these policy decisions in the state constitution it would prevent our state legislature from making needed changes if and when the policies in this amendment proves to be a bad idea. The State Legislature will lose its flexibility to make need changes. It's never a good idea to legislate in the constitution; and

NOW THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED that the Tuscarawas County Board of Commissioners declares its opposition to Issue 1 and they strongly encourage the voters of Tuscarawas County to vote NO on State Issue 1.