ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE P

This November, we will be confronted with multiple local ballot measures that will determine how much we pay in property taxes. Prior to 2000, school districts needed two-thirds approval from the voters to pass local general obligation bond measures. Even though voters in Huntington Beach, Fountain Valley, and Westminster rejected Proposition 39 in 2000, voters statewide approved giving school boards the option to lower the threshold for school bonds to 55%.

The key point is that the lower threshold of 55% is an option. Local school boards representing communities that rejected Proposition 39 are allowed by state law to honor the two-thirds vote threshold for tax measures.

General obligation bond measures incur bonded indebtedness that is paid back with higher property taxes over the term of the debt, typically lasting several decades. The increased property taxes cannot be repealed during that time, since they are required to pay off the debt. The cost to taxpayers over time is often substantially more than the total of bonds issued because taxpayers are on the hook for both principal and interest to be paid to the bond holders.

Are we not taxed enough already?

The Ocean View School District Board of Trustees is proposing a $198-million school bond. The district is not proposing to build any new schools with the additional tax burden. If this bond measure passes, property taxes will be increased in much of Huntington Beach, portions of Fountain Valley, and portions of Westminster to pay off the bonds.

If our local school districts are separately having trouble managing property for school facilities, then we need to look to the benefits of unifying our local school districts together before asking the voters for a property tax increase.

We are taxed enough already and we need to say no to the Measure P tax increase.

s/ Matthew Harper
Councilman, City of Huntington Beach