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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

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Washington County Tea Party Opposes Renewal of Temporary One-Cent Sales Tax on October 11th.

The Washington County Tea Party, one of the largest and most active tea parties in the state, has come out against the proposal to continue Fayetteville's one-cent sales tax at a special election on October 11, 2011. The current one-cent sales tax is set to expire on June 30, 2013, which is causing many citizens to question why it is being rushed through now, in a non-election year, when most voters are not paying attention.

Jeff Oland, Chairman of the Washington County Tea Party, believes that the City is using scare tactics to frighten people into voting for this tax. "To threaten people with closing fire stations and cutting police protection first if they don't keep paying this tax is dishonest. Cutting spending in other areas never seems to be an option," Oland said. "This is a climate where all of us have to make spending priorities and cut back," he added. "People don't come to Fayetteville because they have nice trails. People choose to live and shop and do business where taxes are lower. Keep the taxes high, and the people paying the taxes will eventually leave."

Oland and many tea party members would like to know how it came about that a temporary one-cent tax is now what the City claims it depends upon to fund police and fire, and why they would threaten to cut those areas first. "Police, fire, and roads should be priorities for proper use of tax dollars," Oland said. "Anything after that must be on the table for cuts in this down economy."

Proponents of the tax argue that this is not a tax increase since it is merely continuing an existing tax. "People in Fayetteville already had their property taxes raised last year, and people can only pay so much. People need tax relief," Oland said. "A vote for lower taxes is a vote FOR Fayetteville. This tax affects all of us, even the poor."

Oland and many tea party members believe that lower taxes are the best way to improve any city's economy because it will actually increase revenue in the long run as people choose to shop and buy bigger ticket items where the taxes are lower. Voting this measure down would make Fayetteville more competitive with neighboring cities

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Washington County Tea Party began as a large, non-partisan public protest in Fayetteville in April 2009 as many Fayetteville citizens gathered to call for an end to bailouts, spending, taxes, and loss of individual liberty seen by both parties. Since then, the group has continued to grow and be an active voice for smaller government. Many people who do not identify with either political party have joined the tea party.