

One-Cent Sales Tax for County Infrastructure



Claim	Fact
<p>The Orlando Sentinel reported twice last year that the County Commission would hold a special election for a SunRail Train Tax this year. Millions for SunRail are in the tax.</p>	<p>Current law prohibits the use of County Infrastructure Sales Tax for operations of any kind, including SunRail.</p>
<p>Over \$630 million dollars in new taxes will cost each person \$1450, especially if you buy an appliance, building materials, car, cell phone, TV, computer etc. It is not a penny.</p>	<p>The penny sales tax is not borne solely by the residents of Seminole County. Tourists, commuters, and visitors all contribute to sales taxes paid in Seminole County. The true cost of the penny sales tax to individual households is dependent on income and spending habits.</p> <p>The \$1,450 estimate is based on dividing the total estimated revenue of the sales tax (\$631M) over a 10 year period, by the current population estimate of Seminole County (431,074). This estimate is for a 10-year period and does not take into account future population growth, or the estimate that approximately 20% of the sales tax is paid by non-residents of the County.</p> <p>Based on the average household income in Seminole County, utilizing data from the US Census Bureau and the US Internal Revenue Service, 2013 Sales Tax Deduction Calculator, the amount of an additional one cent sales tax paid annually by a family of 4 with an average annual income of \$91K is approximately \$176, or about \$15 per month.</p> <p>Based on the median income for the Orlando Metropolitan Statistical Area, using 2013 monthly expenditure data from the Economic Policy Institute (EPI.org), the amount of an additional one cent sales tax paid annually in the Orlando region by a family of 4 with a median income of \$64,920 would be 53.40 annually, or about \$4.45 per month.</p> <p>The County average and median annual sales tax cost estimates are based on a family of four and not per person. Estimates do not include major one-time purchases, however the infrastructure sales tax is limited to the first \$5,000 of a major purchase making the maximum cost for any single item \$50.</p>
<p>The School Board just raised our taxes in November by \$26 million per year and did not want this new sales tax increase.</p>	<p>The School Board has never stated that it “did not want this new sales tax increase.” Additionally, on March 11th, the School Board approved the interlocal agreement with The County relative to imposition of the extra penny sales tax and unanimously approved a resolution, committing to reduce the Seminole County Public School millage rate levy if the sales tax referendum passes in May.</p>

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<p>We can't afford it – We have paid nearly a billion dollars in higher sales taxes in Seminole County over 21 years. Yet, the politicians say they still need another 10 years of higher taxes and more of our money.</p>	<p>Between 1991 and 2011, Seminole County collected over \$950 million through the extra penny, funding over 860 projects. Additionally, the county utilized these funds to leverage over \$172 million in federal and state grant funds and earned over \$85 million in interest. In 2012, Seminole County's sales tax rate dropped to 6 cents after the Board of County Commissioners let the One-Cent Sales Tax sunset. At that time, the county had \$45 million in reserve revenues from the penny sales tax, and the BCC felt it appropriate to forgo seeking re-authorization of the tax in order to provide its residents an opportunity for tax relief. It is expected that the county's reserve fund will drop to \$4.6 million by the beginning of the next fiscal year, which is far below what would be necessary to fund the indentified needs.</p>
<p>County Politicians wasted millions of our dollars and now want us to pay for their mistakes. Examples of how they wasted our money:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2 million on a soccer stadium in Orange County. • 523,000 for this special election • Millions and millions are wasted on expensive “gateway” and “streetscapes” (CRA projects) • 24,822 to landscape a private restaurant (CRA projects) • Each commissioner is paid over \$80,000 per year for a part time job 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Partnership with Orlando City Soccer will bring over \$6,000,000 in positive economic impact annually to the County. • The county's budget process began in February, and a draft budget is to be submitted to the BCC by the first week in July. More importantly, the school board's budget year begins July 1st. Holding the election in May will provide the county, the cities, and the school board with certainty regarding the availability of this significant funding source, and whether or not service cuts will be necessary and/or if additional revenue should be sought from other sources. A vote in November or August would not provide this certainty, and would force the school board into a decision regarding the extra one mill it is authorized to levy without knowing whether it will receive the anticipated \$15 million dollars in revenue from the extra penny in sales tax. • Investments within the US 17-92 Community Redevelopment Area are made with funds from the associated CRA trust funds, which are monies that may not be spent elsewhere in the county. • The County Commissioner salaries are consistent with the guidelines prescribed in the Florida Statutes.
<p>City tax payers will be taxed twice for stormwater.</p>	<p>The county is not proposing any stormwater projects within the cities.</p>

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<p>Homeowners in maintained HOAs will pay for subdivisions that are not maintained.</p>	<p>The One-Cent Sales Tax, unlike property taxes, is not levied against Seminole County residents and businesses only. A portion of the sales tax revenues will be paid by visitors to Seminole County, spreading the cost to construct and maintain the infrastructure to all those who benefit from it, and not just county residents and businesses.</p>
<p>The tax increase is not endorsed by the Seminole County Chamber of Commerce.</p>	<p>The Seminole County Chamber of Commerce has not yet taken a position on the pending referendum.</p>
<p>When asked by Channel 9 news, Chairman Bob Dallari could not even state what was in the tax increase.</p>	<p>When Channel 9 News posed the question to Chairman Dallari, the list of proposed projects had not yet been approved by the BCC or Cities. View the listing at www.seminolecountyfl.gov/onecent.</p>
<p>Stores, offices, daycare centers etc. will pay higher rents passing those costs on to you.</p>	<p>The One-Cent Sales Tax, unlike property taxes, is not levied against Seminole County residents and businesses only. A portion of the sales tax revenues will be paid by visitors to Seminole County, spreading the cost to construct and maintain the infrastructure to all those who benefit from it, and not just county residents and businesses.</p>
<p>Higher taxes hurt us, our economy and they kill jobs. Now is not the time to raise taxes.</p>	<p>In recent interviews with the county’s Economic Development Division, the business community has consistently referenced Seminole county’s “quality of life” as a deciding factor in choosing to locate and operate within the County.</p>