

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT FOR COUNTY VOTERS' PAMPHLET

Ballot Title Caption:

Police Services, Child Safety, 24/7 Police Patrol Local Option Levy

Measure Number: _____ Word Total (500 Maximum): 439

Governing Body: **City of St. Helens**

Person Responsible for Content: **Mayor Jennifer Massey**

Signature:  _____

This measure would authorize a five-year local option property tax levy for St. Helens police funding, and collections will begin in 2027. Costs for police services the City plans to fund exceed property tax revenues by more than \$2 million.

For the current fiscal year, 2027-28, the City has arranged bridge financing that will maintain current police staffing levels until June 30, 2027. Without additional revenue beginning July 1, 2027, the City would need to reduce police staffing or find other revenue.

As a result of the \$2 million shortfall, such police services cannot be funded from existing city revenues. This measure would provide police services at the current level for five years. The levy would begin in fiscal year 2027-28 (collected beginning 2027) and would be imposed at a rate of \$1.46 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Levy proceeds would be deposited into a dedicated police fund and used only for police purposes. The proceeds from the levy would fund:

- 1) Investigations referred by Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (ICAC) concerning local child protection and child exploitation. ICAC is a network of over 6,200 agencies investigating child exploitation and crimes against children. ICAC refers more cases to the City than it can investigate without a detective dedicated to such investigations;
- 2) One detective who would serve as initiating investigator of crimes against children and child exploitation, serve as liaison with the ICAC, and as a School Resource Officer; and
- 3) Continuous 24/7 police patrol coverage.

This measure is a local option property tax levy. It would not be charged on utility bills. Levy proceeds may not be used for non-police purposes.

The levy is estimated to raise \$1,730,000 in FY 2027-28, \$1,782,000 in FY 2028-29, \$1,835,460 in FY2029-30, \$1,890,525 in FY2030-31, and \$1,947,240 in FY2031-32 for an estimated five-year total of \$9,185,225.

At the proposed rate, the annual cost would be \$146 for property assessed at \$100,000, \$292 for property assessed at \$200,000, and \$438 for property assessed at \$300,000. Property taxes are based on assessed value, not market value.

If the measure is approved, the City would receive dedicated police funding for five years. It will allow for the police department to continue to investigate crimes against children, including child exploitation crimes, provide one detective who would serve to initiate such investigations and as a School Resource Officer, and provide consistent police patrol services 24/7.

If the measure is not approved, the City will not have a detective dedicated to crimes against children including child exploitation, coordinating with ICAC, and serving as School Resource Officer, and the City will be unable to maintain 24/7 patrol coverage.
