

Letter to the Editor

February 10, 2020

**Question:**

When is a promised, one time, 10-year, tax NOT as pledged to the voters?

**Answer:**

When it has to do with the DIA

In 2012, when the City of Detroit was consumed by bankruptcy, the DIA was successful in asking Macomb, Oakland and Wayne Counties to pass a 10-year millage.

I supported this temporary tax increase as part of the Grand Bargain to save the DIA and the pensions of the employees of the City of Detroit. I thought this solution was brilliant.

The tax payers were told that this tax would only be needed for 10 years and the DIA would not seek a renewal.

Fast forward to 2020, this tax is not due to expire until 2022, and not be renewed. The DIA persuaded the County Commissions of Macomb, Oakland and Wayne, to put a renewal on the March 10, 2020 Presidential ballot. This election will probably be the lowest turnout of any election this year.

Some members of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners pointed out that this was supposed to be a 10-year tax, only. Some of us suggested that if this was going to be placed on the ballot, it should be in the November general election, when the voter turnout will be the greatest. That attempt failed.

What adds insult to injury is when this tax increase was approved by the voters in 2012. One of the first actions was to give the director of the DIA, a 13% retroactive pay raise, and a \$50,000 bonus, and another \$50,000 bonus in 2013. His salary went from \$455,453 to \$514,000. The Vice President of the DIA was given a 36% pay increase and a \$50,000 bonus. Her salary went from approximately \$272,000 to \$369,366

I urge a no vote on the DIA renewal on March 10, 2020.



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