

THE PUBLIC SAFETY REFERENDUM



First Responder Voter News Making a Safer Memphis

Over 140,000 people sign petition Pledging Support

Officials from the Memphis police and firefighters associations announced they have collected more than 140,000 signatures from citizens calling for a referendum vote to increase the sales tax by one half cent (0.5%) to support the city's first responders.

Beginning in 2014, the City of Memphis instituted massive cuts to the pension and health benefits of police officers and firefighters. As a result hundreds left for jobs in other cities and ultimately it is the citizens who have suffered as the city has become less safe.

In the wake of the cuts the police department lost nearly 500 officers, and not surprisingly crime skyrocketed. In the four years since the cuts despite spending

millions on recruitment the City remains hundreds of officers short of the recommended goal of 2480. There has only been a total net gain of 50 officers since 2014.

Since January 1, 2016, the Memphis Fire Department has hired 458 firefighters and dispatchers, during the same time period 256 resigned leaving a net positive of 202, or 44%. "To keep our citizens safe, we need to be able to recruit and retain quality personnel. It doesn't do much good to recruit potential firefighters if they leave due to devastating cuts to pensions and health care they were promised," stated Thomas Malone, President of the Memphis Fire Fighters Association.

The Memphis Fire

Fighters Association and the Memphis Police Association concluded that the fairest and most feasible way of effectively addressing this growing crisis would involve increasing the local sales tax by one half cent (0.5%). Memphis is the only city in Shelby County that has not taken advantage of this opportunity. The cities of Arlington, Bartlett, Collierville, Germantown, Lakeland, and

Millington have all held referendums and opted to levy the half cent increase (0.5%) which has generated millions of dollars for the benefit of their communities. Given that millions visit Memphis each month and use city services it seems only fair that they share in ensuring the safety of Memphis.

Mike Williams, President of the Memphis Police Association stated that, "this

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The 4-1-1 ... Gotta fix the hole in the cup

"You can fill a cup with a water hose all day long, but if there's a hole in the cup you are just wasting time. Same thing for recruiting first responders. Doesn't matter how many we recruit and train, if they leave to go to another city for better pay."



— Jamie White, Shelby County Resident

Everyone knows how bad our Memphis Streets are

"People should vote for this because this will also have dedicated monies for fixing potholes. Everyone knows how bad the Memphis streets are, I hit a major pothole coming here today. We have to fix these roads."



— Nigel Payne, Memphis Resident

Keep the Promise to our First Responders

"Passage of the referendum will require the City to honor their commitment made regarding health care. Our First Responders who retired, after serving 25 years or more with the Memphis Police or Fire Departments kept their commitment and it's time for the City to do the same."



— Mike Lee, Retired Memphis Police Officer

Support Pre-K and Stop Crime Before It Happens

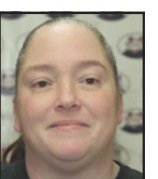
"I think it's great that these monies are also dedicated to Pre-Kindergarten programs. I want my daughter and these children to have a good, clean and healthy start."



— Tyearra Horton, Memphis resident

Three Reasons for Supporting the Referendum

"I support the referendum because we take care of the retired police officers to make sure they get what they deserve... fixing our roads that we really need to do...and helping with the Pre-K for our children."



— Danielle Wagner, Memphis resident

I appreciate each and every one of them

"It is very important we vote for this because we need to take care of our police and fire officers, because they risk their life every day for us. I appreciate each and every one of them and hope you do to. Please vote for the Public Safety Referendum."



— Gwen Joyner, Memphis supporter

When Promises Aren't Kept—One Memphis Fireman's Long Road to Recovery



There is never a typical day for a Memphis Firefighter, but some days will be remembered forever. Sixteen years ago around 5am, the call came in for a vacant house fire that would require several fire crews to respond. When called, the members of each station throw on their gear, race to their vehicles, and multiple units converge on the inferno, not knowing how many people's

lives are in danger or how many could be hurt, or worse.

The unimaginable came that day and Memphis first responders would end up having to apply all their life saving skills to eight of their own. Not realizing they were on a collision course, Engine 8 and Ladder Truck 3 were converging on the scene when tragedy struck, the two 20-ton vehicles collided, seriously injuring

several firefighters, two critically, including Lt. Dennis Lorenz.

With broken bones in his leg, Lorenz would require surgery and doctors were not sure if the limb could be saved. Over the next year, Lorenz would prove them wrong—but at a price.

Though the accident happened in 2003, Dennis Lorenz would stay on the job for 10 more years, retiring in 2014 after 29 years of service. Then the city changed the rules regarding his health care, not keeping their commitment made when he became a Memphis Firefighter in 1985. Originally the City and first responders agreed to split the cost of health

OUR RECOMMENDATION

Vote **FOR** Memphis Public Safety Referendum

When you step into the voting booth on October 3rd you will see an assortment of candidates running for mayor, city council, and various city offices. All-important choices to be sure. Nevertheless, it is the last issue on



the ballot that could have as much impact on the future of our city as all those candidate races. On the last page of the ballot the voters will find the Referendum: Local Option Sales Tax. This initiative was proposed by the Fire and Police Associations to restore health and retirement benefits that were taken away in 2014 and 2016.

Mayors and City Councils love to say they support First Responders. In the end, however, actions speak louder than words and the men and women who risk it all every day for their fellow citizens found themselves left out in the cold facing a bleak and uncertain future.

First Responders are not wired to lose hope when faced with a challenge. The Memphis Police and Firefighter Associations hit the streets and collected more than 140,000 signatures required for a referendum to be placed on the October 3rd ballot that would increase the local sales tax by a ½ penny in order to restore lost benefits. Both associations pledged that any remaining monies would be used on Pot Holes and/or Pre-K, the two most popular issues according to citizens.



Good for them. And now it's time to do our part. Early voting is September 13 to 28 and Election Day is October 3rd. We whole-heartedly urge Memphis voters keep the promises made to those who put their lives on the line every day to protect us and vote "FOR" the Memphis Public Safety Referendum—it's the most important, best, and last vote you will cast in 2019.

Over 140,000 people sign petition pledging support

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proposition ensures that health care and pensions will be restored to first responders before massive cuts were incurred. Perhaps most importantly it will restore the health care benefits to retirees who were stripped of their health care and far too often are facing premiums that decimate their fixed pension payments."

The fire and police associations submitted petitions to the Shelby County Election Commission for verification. The City Charter requires signatures from 10% of the City's approximate 385,000 registered voters to place the referendum on the ballot. The petition was certified to have more than enough signatures to place the issue before voters in the October 3rd City of Memphis election, the referendum will be the last issue on the ballot.

When Promises Aren't Kept—One Memphis Fireman's Long Road to Recovery

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care with the city paying 70% and the firefighter paying 30%, and the City would continue to honor that payment division for retirees after at least 25 years of service.

In 2014 the City changed the policy regarding first responders' health care, allowing retirees to stay on the City insurance plan but requiring retirees pay 100% of their insurance costs, which in Lorenz's case came to more than \$1100 per month. Then just two years later, the City removed all retirees from City's insurance plan, instead providing \$5,000 annually to a medical savings account and leaving firefighters to find health care coverage on the open market. With previous job-related injuries and pre-existing conditions, the additional costs are financially devastating to some.

Most people do not know that Memphis police and firefighters are not eligible for social security, so there is no replacing the City's cuts to their pensions with social security benefits.

By voting "FOR" the public safety referendum on October 3rd the people of Memphis can restore the original commitment made by the City, retirees will be allowed to return to the City health plan and resume the cost-sharing agreement—making good on the original promise.

"I'm not asking for a handout. I'm just asking the voters to support the referendum, so the City keeps the promise it made to me 34 years ago," noted a hopeful Retired Lt. Dennis Lorenz.



A 3-Part Solution

A vote "FOR" the Referendum is a vote "FOR" Public Safety

- Accelerate Recruitment and RETENTION of firefighters and police officers
- Stopping Tomorrow's Crime Today
- Safer Streets for EVERY Citizen

Restoration, Recruitment and Retention

- ✓ The restoration of benefits will allow the police and fire departments to rebuild to the levels of manpower needed to truly keep the people of Memphis safe.
- ✓ In 2011, MPD had over 2400 officers and violent crime fell to some of the lowest levels ever recorded.
- ✓ Memphis began to hemorrhage police officers and fire fighters after a disastrous decision to slash their pensions and healthcare
- ✓ After losing more than 500 police officers, it is the citizens who have suffered as violent crime has skyrocketed.
- ✓ You can't recruit your way out of a RETENTION CRISIS. After millions spent on recruitment over the last 4 years the city is still hundreds of officers below the recommended compliment of 2480 police officers needed to truly keep the people of Memphis safe
- ✓ Since January 1, 2016, the Memphis Fire Department has an overall retention rate of less than 50%. That's a lot of tax dollars spent walking out the door.

Public Safety, Pre-K, and Potholes

Time and time again, we were told by citizens that in the case of any extra funds generated they would like to see every penny accounted for rather than just handing the city a blank check. The most popular issues on people's minds were **Pot Holes** and **Pre-K**. It didn't take us long to realize that both of these issues are important components of **PUBLIC SAFETY**.

Pre-K: Building A Safer Tomorrow

The most successful form of law enforcement is to prevent crime before it happens.

- ✓ Kids who attend pre-K are 3 times more likely to attend college.
- ✓ Kids who attend pre-K are 2 times less likely to be arrested.
- ✓ Kids who attend pre-K are less likely to become involved with law enforcement, become teenage parents, or use public assistance.



Potholes: Building Safer Streets

All Memphians deserve safe roads that won't damage their vehicles and endanger their safety.

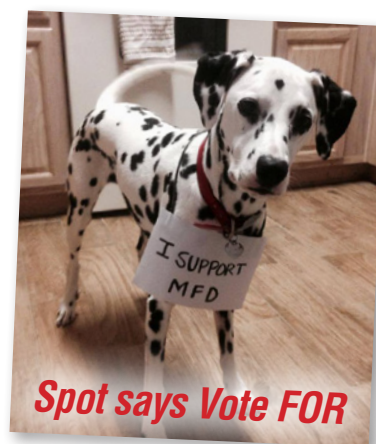
- ✓ Emergency vehicles should never be forced to drive slower than necessary due to the poor conditions of the roads.
- ✓ In the Memphis urban area, on average, 122 people were killed in traffic crashes in each of the last three years. Safer better maintained roads will lower that number.
- ✓ Driving on Memphis area roads in need of repair costs the average driver \$2,019 per year in the form of extra vehicle operating costs.



Text Rescue911 to 41400 for Updates
For More Info: www.Rescue911.net



I love Memphis and I want it to be a city that is safe for me and my grandchildren. Having qualified fire and policemen is essential for ensuring safety. Lets improve Memphis and make it a city were individuals want to live in.



Spot says Vote FOR

Vote FOR the Referendum!!!

[Handwritten signature]

They support & help us every day. We need to support them however we can. Please pass this bill!

[Handwritten signature]

This means everything to us. Please support this. I'm a long-term Memphian. Please support our Police and Fire fighters! Kathy Ferguson

Memphis needs more protection!! Adults + Children. *[Handwritten signature]*

Stefan Cobb
[Handwritten signature]
Vince Good
Edward Clayton

Public Safety is the #1 priority of government servants. I worked for MFD at Family Trouble Center, a counseling unit of MFD. Dr. Patricia K Seal

Please support public safety by voting "FOR" the referendum!! My family thanks you!! *[Handwritten signature]*

"For our firefighters and police officers risking their lives in the line of duty."

I'll be insured when I retire! Tom Rudy
[Handwritten signature]

MEMPHIS PUBLIC SAFETY REFERENCENDUM

VOTE FOR

OCT 3

Growing up in a fire family, public safety is important to keep everyone safe. Without the proper number of employees it puts everyone at risk.

Public Safety workers should receive the benefits they were promised. Anything less is an affront to public integrity.

[Handwritten signature]

Public safety to me means to be able to live in a area that's free of crime, abuse and neglect. Knowing that I can go home and if I find my home broken into I can call law enforcement and know that they will do their best to solve my problem. Public Safety is where it is!

Mikey Arch

All public servants deserve the benefits they were promised. We need the public's help. Jeff Robinson Firefighter Fire Prevention

OUR PUBLIC SERVANTS ARE VERY VALUABLE AND WITH THE ABSENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY WE ALL KNOW HOW CHAOTIC IT WOULD BE. MICHAEL BOBO FIREFIGHTER FIRE PREVENTION

Charles E Robert Starling *[Handwritten signature]*

Cynthia Hires safety is very important to my love ones *[Handwritten signature]*

Attracting and retaining good qualified employees of the Police & Fire Department is absolutely imperative to maintaining the safety of Memphis and its citizens. I'm voting "for" this referendum.

Rose Ann Bradley

Public Safety is very important to my family! *[Handwritten signature]*

Public Safety Means to me is that there a first responder close to everyone in case of an emergency and they need some sort of assistance.

Andrew Reber



My husband deserves the benefits he was promised and deserves. Our public servants need our support because they always have our backs! *[Handwritten signature]*





Sometimes Even Heroes Need Backup

 **Vote FOR Public Safety Referendum Oct. 3th**

Voting "FOR" a Safer Memphis

LOSING SOME OF OUR BEST

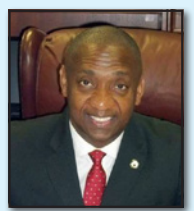
"Retention is the biggest issue. It costs thousands of dollars to recruit and train firefighters and police officers. Memphis taxpayers spend the money to train them but because of low pay and health insurance, they leave to work for another city, sometimes in another State. We need to pay them enough and have the benefits to keep them here."



– Thomas Malone, President Memphis Fire Fighters Assn.

FIGHT CRIME BY BACKING THE BLUE

"In 2011, we had more than 2,400 active duty police officers and saw some of the lowest violent crime numbers ever recorded. After the cuts 500 officers left the department and crime has gone up dramatically. Help us recruit and keep good officers here, get our ranks back up where they should be, and crime will go down. Vote "FOR" the Referendum."



– Mike Williams, President, Memphis Police Association

TOURISTS AND NON-MEMPHIS WORKERS HELP PAY THE COST, TOO

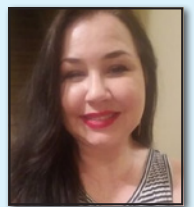
"Studies show we have millions of people visit Memphis every year. There are thousands of people who come to Memphis every day to work, they just don't live here. But the tourists and these workers buy things every day, so every lunch, coke, pack of cigarettes helps raise the money to pay for this referendum. Our police and fire protect them too, and they will help pay the cost."



– Yalandra Hampton, Memphis Resident

SUPPORT FIRST RESPONDER FAMILIES

"Firefighters and police officers' jobs are stressful enough on them, but don't forget the stress on their families, too. Especially every day when they walk out that door. It gives us peace of mind to know they will be taken care of if they are injured on the job. Restoring their health care and benefits is fair to all."



– Lisa Akin, Spouse of Police Officer

WE HAVE RETENTION CRISIS

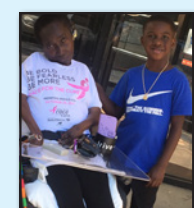
"You can't recruit your way out of a retention crisis. After millions spent on recruitment over the last 4 years the city is still hundreds of officers below the recommended compliment of 2,480 police officers needed to keep the citizens of Memphis safe"



– John Covington, Memphis Police Association

THEY SUPPORT US—NOW WE SUPPORT THEM

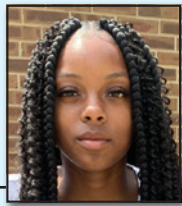
"Our firefighters and police officers are some of the strongest supports of those in the disabled community. I work with them a great deal and want to encourage all my friends to vote 'FOR' the Public Safety Referendum. We need to support them like they support us."



– Bobbie Fields, Memphis Resident

KEEP KIDS IN SCHOOL—OFF THE STREETS

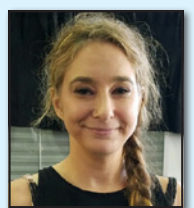
"I'm voting 'FOR' because some of the money will go to Pre-K programs. A good education keeps kids in school and off the streets."



– Elexis Metcalf, Memphis Resident

HEROES NEED OUR HELP TOO

"No doubt our First Responders are well trained, but the day to day grind of putting your life on the line, worrying about the next call, takes its toll. They need to be compensated like the professionals they are including their health benefits they earned."



– Rachel Hohenberg, Memphis Resident

MEMPHIS ISN'T ALONE

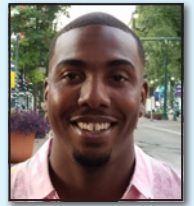
"Every city in Shelby County, Arlington, Bartlett, Collierville, Germantown and Lakeland all charge the additional ½ penny sales tax. Memphis adding ½ penny to support first responders, Pre-Kindergarten and fixing potholes, won't cause people to move outside the city—because they already pay the ½ penny, too."



– Matt Tomek, Memphis Fire Fighters Assn.

BAD ROADS GET PEOPLE KILLED

"If you have to dial 9-1-1, you want that ambulance or fire truck to get here as fast as possible. Having to drive slower because of the potholes slows them down those extra minutes cost lives. Using this money to fix the roads is a life-saving idea."



– Lawrence Johnson, Memphis Resident



Vote FOR

To find your polling place or for more information: www.Rescue901.net
 Text Rescue901 to 41400 for update
 Early Voting September 13 – 28
ELECTION DAY OCTOBER 3RD