

Are Reno Taxpayers Being Defrauded Of Tax Money Dedicated to Police & Fire Staffing?

May 17, 1988 City of Reno taxpayers voted for a ballot measure commonly called "Safety 88" where, essentially taxpayers were promised 88 more officers for a minimum of 313 cops or more based on a population ratio. Instead the money went to pay raises and possibly other unauthorized uses. Reno's population has grown by 100,000 but we only have about 280 Reno funded police officers. Further, the money has been placed in the general fund and check your property tax bill- no record! . There are also two fire tax levies too worth review. The City admitted in a letter of 12-28-12 that they don't have proof readily available about any city council confirmation of the levy or levies. We deserve our promised cops, proper fiscal accounting or reduce out tax rate.

The City of Reno reports that taxpayers are in fact being taxed at the rate of \$0.1684 per \$100 of assessed value. That levy revenue is believed to be over \$10,000,000 annually. Is that money being used for the hiring, training and equipping of officers over the 225 as in the measure?

The ballot measure specifically uses the word "additional". The ballot official explanation (copy on request) includes, "for the purpose **increasing** (emphasis added) law enforcement services...to hire, train, and equip 88 additional officers."

1988 Police Chief Robert Bradshaw "That figure is the maximum allowed by law that residents may be assessed. However, the City Council will have the latitude of using a lessor figure...." The Mayor said "...you will decide whether you're willing to pay an average \$5 per month to have 88 more police officers in our neighborhoods. The present budget provides for 225 police officers. If the ballot issue is approved, we will hire 88 additional police officers...for a total of 313... The money approved by the voters will be **permanently restricted by law** to hire and equip the 88 additional police officers." (emphasis added)

The overall Reno tax rate (including Safety 88) is .9598%. A review of property tax bill shows no public safety or specific levy (i.e. \$0.1684). In a review of the City reporting in the CAFR (audit) or other City documents I find nothing relating to Safety 88 or any levy. In fact, when I formerly complained to the state (CLGF), Reno Finance Director Robert Chisel replied that he had no idea what I was talking about! Various complaints to the City of Reno have been unanswered.

Yes Reno has severe financial issues but the law is the law. We have a Nevada Attorney General opinion #2011-04 that seems to confirm our position.

What can you do? Check your tax bill and see we're right. Contact your elected officials and ask. Contact the Nevada Attorney General and ask. Contact us- legal action may be required.