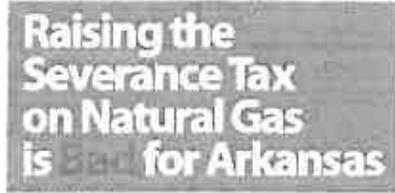


Little Rock Voters Support Penny Tax Increase



JobsAndAffordableEnergy.com

For the first time since 1994, Little Rock city voters approved a tax increase that was supported by **Mayor Mark Stodola** and city business leaders.

The special election called for two separate votes on a permanent 5/8 cent "operations" tax increase and a 10-year temporary 3/8 cent "capital investment" tax increase. The combined one-cent sales tax increase will generate an estimated \$45 million annually for the city of Little Rock and will go into effect in January 2012.

The unofficial, but complete, vote tally showed the 5/8 cent tax passing 54-46%. The 3/8 cent tax also passed by a 54-46% margin. All told, more than 22,000 votes were cast for each measure.

According to supporters, the 5/8 cent tax would hire 52 new police officers and 36 new firefighters. Additionally, the tax would create new **Central Arkansas Transit** routes and provide money for youth prevention and intervention programs.

The 3/8 cent capital investment tax would fund or partially fund:

- * 2 new fire stations
- * 2 new police sub-stations
- * The replacement of an older public safety communications system
- * **Little Rock Port** expansion
- * A **UAMS-UALR Technology Research Park** aimed at developing and recruiting high-tech businesses
 - * New ball fields for youth sports
 - * Streets, sidewalks and drainage

Mayor Stodola told **Fox 16 News** that with passage of the taxes his first priorities will be for the communications system improvements and for hiring police, fire and 911 responders.

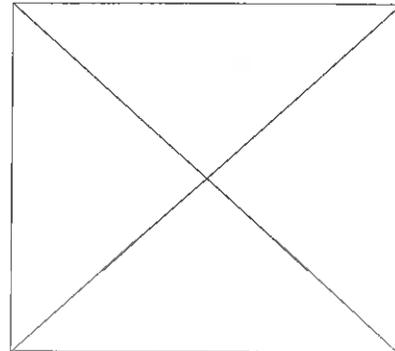
"I'm encouraged so far," **Stodola** said after early and absentee votes were tallied. "We want to see this city move forward." **Stodola** also promised that a citizen's committee would be formed to push for transparency in the spending of the new money.

Jim Lynch, a spokesman for a grassroots group organized to defeat the tax increase plan, said it's "hard to win when you're being outspent 15-to-1."

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