

## Measure R returning to Del Norte County voters

August 3, 2022



Voters in Del Norte County will have two chance to vote on whether to support sales tax measures to help fund vital government services.

Weeks after the city council in Crescent City agreed to put Measure S back on the ballot after a petition drive collected enough signatures, the Del Norte County Board of Supervisors voted to do the same with Measure R.

Both measures were approved by voters in 2020, although Measure R won by a much slimmer margin. The measure, which raised the sales tax in Del Norte County by 1%, was narrowly approved as 5,018 votes cast ballots in favor of the tax and 4,971 voted against it.

Petitions were taken out in an effort to send both measures back to voters, with supporters saying local residents are already paying too much in taxes and the increased sales tax hurts local businesses as similar businesses in Brookings, Oregon, charge no sales tax.

According to Del Norte County Registrar of Voters Allissia Northrup, organizers needed to collect 416 signatures to force another election on Measure R. Supporters turned in 578 signatures and 480 were certified.

That left supervisors with no choice but to vote to send the issue back to voters in November.

While supervisors voted without comment, Norma Williams, the Del Norte County Employees Association SEIU president, said her union would be fighting against the measure in November.

Williams said the SEIU executive board fully supports Measure R funding.

“As of last week, when we met with our local leadership, they have 100 percent told us they are behind all county employees and they will be working with us to defeat these two ballot measures in November,” Williams said.

She also challenged other unions representing county employees to publicly fight against Measure R.

“We welcome and invite them to join us in that,” Williams said.

Williams said while funding from Measure R does not benefit all county employees directly, she hopes they will all fight to preserve the tax funding.

“This impacts all of us in regards to the services as well,” she said. “I’m asking county employees to stand up instead of sitting down, speak out instead of being silent. I’m asking all county employees to help us defeat these two measures.”

Measure R was promoted as a 1% sales tax that would raise around \$1.2 million a year.

The funding is set aside for law enforcement, emergency response, road repairs, preparing for natural disasters, maintaining emergency dispatch, addressing blight and other general services.

Voters will have a chance to vote on both Measure S and Measure R again in the November general election.