



RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the St. Tammany Chamber of Commerce (the “Chamber”) serves its members as the Northshore’s premier business organization; and

WHEREAS, our mission is to strengthen the business climate and economic vitality of St. Tammany by empowering a community where businesses thrive and citizens are proud to live, as well as advancing general welfare and prosperity so citizens and the business community can prosper; and

WHEREAS, our Chamber has been dedicated to serving Northshore businesses and the community through advocacy, connectivity, and business support since 1963; and

WHEREAS, surveys consistently deem public safety to be the number one priority quality of life issue appreciated by the citizens of St. Tammany Parish; and

WHEREAS, St. Tammany is the fourth largest parish in the state as well as the fourth fastest-growing parish behind Orleans, East Baton Rouge, and Jefferson parishes and has had significantly lower crime rates than other parishes of similar size and growth projections; and

WHEREAS, passage of this tax is an effort to ensure St. Tammany Parish citizens will continue to enjoy the safety and serenity provided by the current criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, our Chamber has been monitoring the St. Tammany Parish Government budget for years, with the Chamber recommending in 2013 that Parish Government form a Citizens Budget Review Committee; and

WHEREAS, in the fall of 2020 Parish Government finally did create a Revenue Review Committee comprised of 24 business and government leaders who met 14 times for a total of 400 hours, not inclusive of the significant written correspondence and recordings, before concluding with the recommendation for a 0.40% sales tax, which will provide \$22.2 million of the \$30 million that will be dedicated and used solely for the purpose of funding the Parish’s state-mandated responsibilities to various governmental agencies, including

- (i) the Sheriff's Office for parish prisoners and maintaining jail facilities,
- (ii) the District Attorney's Office,
- (iii) the 22nd Judicial District Court, and
- (iv) required maintenance and operations of the justice center complex; and

WHEREAS, the Chamber Board of Directors is confident that the Committee exercised honesty, integrity and transparency when investigating all options, scrubbing all budgets, and determining that Parish Government will be unable to meet its financial obligations in March 2022; and

WHEREAS, Parish Government agreed to a seven-year vs. a 10-year sunset for this tax, in an effort to build public trust during those 7 years; and

WHEREAS, St. Tammany Parish currently has an 8.7 cent sales tax rate with 9.2 cents being the state average and whereas our parish had 78 visitors/tourists for every 100 residents during the last four quarters whose spending contribute to our total sales tax collections and will significantly contribute to the total expected \$22.2 million from this tax: and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Chamber's Board of Directors:

That following lengthy discussion and research provided by the Advocacy & Public Policy Committee who recommended to the Chamber's Board of Directors that they endorse and support the 0.40% sales tax proposition that will be included on the November 13, 2021 ballot, a motion to support the proposition was voted on at their meeting held Thursday, October 7, 2021, to encourage support by voters for this measure to ensure continued public safety that is vital to the quality of life enjoyed by St. Tammany Parish, where businesses thrive and citizens are proud to live.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, respectfully signed this 12th day of October 2021.



Tom Meyer
Chairman of the Board



Lacey Osborne
President and CEO