

Comment to be included in the record for July 28th discussion:

As a thirty-year resident of Apple Valley, I feel I must speak up on the proposed ballot issue to raise the sales tax rate in the Town. As much of the nation speaks of defunding law enforcement, an ideology I do not subscribe to, it is at least ironic that we speak of a guaranteed 5% annual increase of this institution over the next five years. As the single largest expenditure from our general fund already, a 25% increase over the next five years of that expenditure smells of unsustainability, even in the best of times. As the crime rate has gone down in most cities due to stay-at-home orders, it appears that this increase is based on "want" rather than "need." As a State worker who was originally due a 2% raise this month, our union instead agreed to put that raise on hold, and take a 9% pay cut over the next two years via mandatory furloughs. I was happy to do this, feeling fortunate just to keep my job when many of my Apple Valley neighbors have not been so fortunate.

History has shown that tax increases do not go away, even as prosperous times return. Does Apple Valley really want to be known from here on, as the one town of the big three where you never want to buy a big-ticket item, unless you enjoy spending more on that item than you would in Victorville or Hesperia? Perhaps, instead, we should go back to the bargaining table with certain groups who have conveniently decided to keep their head in the sand, ignoring the unprecedented times we are currently toiling under. Expecting our less fortunate neighbors who have lost their job through no fault of their own, to now pay more for toilet paper, clothing and school supplies, so one group can pad their salary and benefit packages, even deservedly, lacks compassion and good citizenship. If we all work together, we can all get through this difficult and unprecedented COVID-19 period. But that involves all of us making necessary concessions. All of us.

L Christiansen
Town of Apple Valley resident