

The Empty Case Against Issue 2

By Morgan R. McIntosh
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On October 27th, Mr. Brian Massie wrote that he “Cannot Support” the Concord Fire levy on the November 5th 2024 ballot. Mr. Massie focuses on an assumption that all participants at any level of government are inherently incompetent, dishonest and fiscally irresponsible, allowing for no deviation from this assumption. I believe that 5 years as a trustee and my professional resume demonstrate that assumption is untrue.

Issue 2 is critical to keeping Concord Township safe. In his argument against Issue 2, Mr. Massie cites 9 criticisms of County and State government. There is no connection to Concord Township, or the Fire Department budget. Using these objections as justification to opposing Issue 2, is unjust and is equal to shooting yourself in the foot!

Mr. Massie, presents no specific argument against this levy. He relies on the same longstanding anti-tax argument citing only that the only good tax is a rejected tax. His case, sadly, is representative of the platitudes we see from so many politicians these days. Applying this thinking places Concord Township in danger.

My colleagues and I have been accused of mismanaging the township budget, the construction of fire station 1 and of being intentionally deceitful to the residents of Concord Township. None of this is true. Our legitimate, honest, hard work and our genuine concern for the safety of our community is frequently disregarded.

On September 24th of this year, I presented an op-ed offering a detailed explanation of why Issue 2 is necessary. LFC published this op-ed the same day. I provided an explanation of how the budget became strained and a sound reasoning for the levy. My op-ed specifically addresses, how increase of funds via the sexennial revelation will effect the township budget; explaining how that is not adequate to support the fire department in an meaningful way.

Additionally, I describe broader aspects of the Concord budget, discussing at length multiple, proactive efforts the township has made to supplement our budget into the future; such as the possibility of receiving federal grant funds and additional tax tools that will not cost Concord residents any additional tax, both to helping build station 2. Mr. Massie, fails to acknowledge that Concord Township has responsibly operated for 9 years on the same funding level without asking tax payers for additional funding demonstrating fiscal responsibility.

In 2019, Mr. Massie, along with Affordable Concord Taxes, objected to a levy my predecessors placed on the ballot to construct new fire stations. ACT successfully defeated the levy. This very rejection, has cost Concord taxpayers millions of dollars. The delay of one year, forced Concord Township to endure historic, global, inflation across the entire project. Had funds been secured in 2019, the construction of station 1, the larger, more costly portion of the project, would have escaped inflation saving taxpayers millions.

Mr. Massie navigates tax levy waters in a dense fog, with no ability to see any light that represents the possibility of a just position in government. If he would embrace this possibility, I believe his core argument would gain credibility. In 2019, Mr. Massie and members of ACT were wrong to oppose the bond levy. Their message to wait, was a fateful one. His objection to Issue 2 is equally reckless and will hurt Concord residents immediately upon its failure.

Failure of Issue 2 will cause a lack of necessary funding for equipment to keep fire fighters safe, equipment to save lives and funding to for staffing of the next generation of first responders. Without a budget increase our fire fighters will seek opportunities with departments where funding is more certain.

If there is one thing that government should do, without exception, it is keep our community safe. Issue 2 accomplishes this. Defeating Issue 2 puts the residents of Concord Township at risk, particularly our seniors.

Mr. Morgan R. McIntosh is a 26 year resident of Concord Township, and a Township Trustee. He was first elected in 2019, now serving in his second term. He is the Concord Township representative to the Concord-Painesville JEDD Board, and has served consecutively as President of the Lake County Township Association since 2022.