

# THE TRUTH ABOUT MEASURE M

Contributed by Administrator  
Monday, 28 January 2008

January 28, 2008 The Sabatino Report Which is which? Which organization alleges to support Measure M. Is it the Stanislaus County Taxpayers Association or is it the Stanislaus Taxpayers Association or maybe it's neither one. Sandy Lucas, Joan Clendenin, John Shores have all been on the Morning Mayor Show maybe they can explain. View point article for the Bee by Carmen Sabatino When considering Measure M, think of M as in Medicine. Expensive medicine. Unnecessary medicine, Bad medicine. Measure M opens the door to spending as much as \$249,000 per year in salary increases for the mayor and city council members, and we simply don't have the money. What would be the trade off? Less road improvement? Reduced fire and police protection? More park closures? Fewer curbside services? Ask yourself this: Does this council, which is apparently incapable of balancing a budget, deserve a big fat raise? Except for this raid on the taxpayers' dollars, Measure M is largely unnecessary, and it's hard to escape the conclusion that most of it has been constructed to confuse the voters. Take, for example, the establishment of a separate office of City Auditor, Sounds good, doesn't it? Increased "accountability" and all that, Well, the fact is that the position of City Auditor is already established by the City Charter (Section 900), and all the council needs to do is hire someone to fill the position, (It's currently combined with the office of City Clerk, but that was done by council vote, and can be undone the same way) Measure M mandates "annual performance audits for key personnel." Again, it sounds good & hellip; until you know that these "audits" are nothing new. They've been done in the past by the City Manager with the assistance of three members of the City Council called the "Audit Committee", They report directly to the full Council. Enshrining this in the charter would accomplish nothing. Measure M will "make deputy directors and attorneys "at will" employees." These employees now report directly to the City Manager or the City Attorney, both of whom are already "at will" employees. Should either prove incapable of supervising his or her subordinates, the council can, and should find a replacement. If you think you see a pattern developing here, you're right. Measure M is a bit of a "Trojan horse", larded on the outside with a number of unnecessary or redundant "feel good" changes to the charter in order to sell what this proposal is really about & mdash; more money for the mayor and the council members. That's the reason all these changes are presented to you, the voter, in one confusing "all or nothing" package. There's no legal reason for bundling these proposals together; it's marketing, pure and simple, done with the knowledge that this money grab for the personal benefit of the mayor and the council members would likely be defeated if proposed separately, openly, and honestly. Don't be taken in by Measure M's self-description as an "increased accountability" vehicle. The Charter Review Committee determined that this phrase resonated with votes, and that's why you see it in the title. It's enough to make you cynical or even sick, isn't it? In any case, Measure M is bad medicine. As citizens and taxpayers of Modesto, your only recourse is to not be fooled. Don't let them insult your intelligence or pick your pocket. Vote NO on Measure M.