Arguments in support of Measure E County Charter Amendment Ordinance

The proposed amendment updates the base salary of the Board of Supervisors from $1,045 per month to a benchmark based on a California minimum wage full-time equivalent. The current salary has remained unchanged since 1989, despite decades of inflation, increasing responsibilities, and the growing complexity of county government. During that time, inflation has reduced the purchasing power of the supervisor salary by approximately 63 percent, meaning today's salary buys little more than one-third of what it did when voters last approved it. This proposal establishes a reasonable compensation benchmark that restores an appropriate baseline for a position responsible for governing the county and making decisions that affect every resident.

This measure is also about preserving our local government. As the real value of the supervisor salary has steadily declined over the past 37 years, so has the ability of ordinary working residents to serve in elected office. A compensation level that has lost most of its purchasing power creates an unintended barrier to public service, limiting the pool of qualified candidates to those who can afford the financial sacrifice. The proposed benchmark is a modest, objective standard that helps ensure the Board remains accessible to working families, business owners, farmers, tradespeople, retirees, and others from every walk of life.

Finally, this amendment provides a transparent and depoliticized approach to supervisor compensation. Rather than requiring periodic ballot measures simply to keep pace with inflation, the proposal ties the base salary to an objective benchmark. This approach promotes transparency and predictability while helping ensure that future generations of Tehama County residents are not discouraged from public service simply because compensation fails to keep pace with inflation.

s/ Parker R. Hunt
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Tehama County