City Attorney’s Impartial Analysis of Measure T

Measure T permits the levying generally on visitors to the City of no more than a twelve percent (12%) tax on hotel/motel charges paid within the City of Bell. The actual tax rate will be established by ordinance of the majority of the members of the City Council but could not exceed the 12% cap. The tax is levied only on persons staying at a hotel or motel in the City for thirty days or less - the tax is not imposed on City of Bell property owners.

Measure T was placed on the ballot by the City Council. The City Council has heard a great deal from the community about their desire for better local services, especially public safety, streets and pothole repair, and community beautification. Measure T is estimated to annually generate (if the maximum tax rate of twelve percent (12%) is levied and with approximately 163 hotel/motel rooms in the city) approximately $285,000 per year to be deposited into the City's General Fund, to be used for general City purposes including law enforcement, street repairs and community development.

This type of tax is known as a transient occupancy tax, or “TOT,” and is common in many California cities. For example, the neighboring City of Commerce has a transient occupancy tax of twelve percent (12%), the neighboring City of Bell Gardens has a transient occupancy tax of eight percent (8%), and the transient occupancy tax paid in many California cities is twelve percent (12%) or higher.

The proposed TOT will provide the City of Bell with locally-controlled funding for City services that are protected by law from the State Legislature.

Measure T proposes amending existing Chapter 3.24 of Title 3 of the Bell Municipal Code, and repealing Ordinance 1022 which was passed in 1990 by the City Council to suspend collection of the then existing TOT which was 8%. Measure T reserves the right of the Council to make changes to the TOT not affecting the maximum rate approved by the voters.

This measure will take effect only if a majority of those voting on this ballot measure cast a “Yes” vote at the March 7, 2017 general municipal election.

The above statement is an impartial analysis of Measure T. If you desire a copy of the ordinance or measure, please call the election official’s office at (323) 588-6211 and a copy will be mailed to you at no cost.