

## **False Mailer Response**

Some of our neighbors are getting an "announcement" in the mail that FALSELY claims "*Catoosa Commissioners are trying to sneak in a new sales tax*".

Here are the facts:

There is no new tax on the upcoming ballot. The SPLOST (Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax) referendum on the March 12 Presidential Preference Primary ballot asks voters to choose whether to continue a 1% portion of the 7% sales tax. Voters have approved this 1% SPLOST since 1994. SPLOST gives local governments in Georgia a way to pay for capital improvement projects including public safety, public infrastructure, public buildings and facilities.

The current voter-approved 2019 SPLOST cycle expires on June 30, 2024. If voters approve the 2024 SPLOST, collection will begin July 1, 2024, and continue through June 2030. That's why the 2024 SPLOST question is with the March 12, 2024 Presidential Preference Primary ballot and not the General Election ballot in November.

The Catoosa County Board of Commissioners is not "trying to sneak" anything. Public discussion of the 2024 SPLOST began six months ago. The Board held its first announced public work session on August 24, 2023. Announced public work sessions continued into October 2023. During these open work sessions representatives from the cities of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold as well as directors of all Catoosa County Government departments presented their capital projects needs for the next six years.

Additionally, during its December 5, 2023 regular meeting, the Board of Commissioners adopted resolutions to hold an election on Tuesday, March 12, asking citizens whether to continue the 1% SPLOST. A news release was published on the county's website, Catoosa.com, the county's Facebook page, and distributed to local news media which published the story.

In summary, public discussion of SPLOST began last August. SPLOST is NOT a new tax. Catoosa County Commissioners are NOT "trying to sneak in a new sales tax". The 2024 SPLOST referendum is on the Presidential Preference Primary ballot, and if it passes the 7% sales tax will NOT increase.

Catoosa County Government cannot advocate voting yes or no on the SPLOST referendum. We will continue to be transparent, we will correct misinformation, and we will provide the facts about SPLOST. To learn more, please visit [www.catoosa.com/government/splost](http://www.catoosa.com/government/splost).