Email Presentation from SenseiKobraKai

This November, Lorain County voters will decide whether to approve a new 0.25% sales tax to fund the Sheriff's Office — part of what appears to be a plan to build a new county jail.

While that may sound practical, this proposal would create a permanent tax increase with no cap, placing the burden squarely on working families, seniors, and even teenagers spending their first paychecks.

Lorain County's lower tax rate has always been one of our strongest advantages — helping attract new residents and businesses. Raising the sales tax risks slowing that growth and making life here more expensive for everyone.

Before asking taxpayers for more, the County Commissioners and Sheriff's Office should look at their existing revenue streams and vendor contracts. Inside the jail, basic inmate essentials cost 50 to 300% more than the same items outside the facility. Phone calls and even emails are charged at inflated rates. Yet, instead of ensuring those profits benefit the county, most of the money goes to outside vendors.

Why not start there? Renegotiate those contracts so the county retains more of that revenue — or, if vendors refuse, replace them with fairer providers. Reducing costs for inmates while keeping more funds in-county would create a fairer, smarter funding model without burdening taxpayers.

Additionally, the county should be exploring state and federal grant opportunities, departmental reallocations, and temporary administrative salary adjustments before turning to a permanent sales tax increase.

Residents in Lorain, Elyria, Sheffield, Avon, and North Ridgeville already pay for their own police departments. This new county tax would mean paying twice — once locally, and once for the county jail.

If a new jail is truly needed, leadership should find the money first — not reach into the pockets of people on fixed incomes.

Let's demand transparency, creativity, and fiscal responsibility before another permanent tax is added. This November, vote NO on the Lorain County 0.25% sales tax. Let's fix the system — not overtax our citizens.

For the past two years since Jeff Riddell took office, there have been zero budget hearings, zero cuts, and avoidance in giving the public the budget numbers. Many summary sheets from 2025 show large raises and more employees making over $100,000 in salary — unheard of in Lorain County.

Emails suggest attempts to conceal salaries, wages, and increases from the public and explain the disappearance of personal summary sheets. These claims will soon be supported by released documents.

The county Tax Budget shows receipts and expenses for the General Fund: 2022 - $82.1M receipts, $96.8M expenses 2023 - $83.4M receipts, $81.6M expenses 2024 - $81.5M receipts, $86.1M expenses 2025 - $82.1M receipts, $86.7M expenses 2026 - $81.6M receipts, $86.7M expenses

Expenses have outpaced receipts since 2024. The 2024 ARPA funds of about $6.1 million created ongoing expenses tied to one-time money.

Salaries and wages have risen steeply: 2020 - $107.1M 2021 - $102.1M 2022 - $110.7M 2023 - $113.5M 2024 - $119.8M 2025 - $131.0M (estimated)

High earners ($100k+): 2020 – 65 employees ($8.1M) 2021 – 55 employees ($6.4M) 2022 – 99 employees ($11.4M) 2023 – 102 employees ($11.6M) 2024 – 154 employees ($17.2M)

The commissioners increased the vehicle registration fee ($1.4M annually) and plan to shift $13M for the Sheriff’s Office out of the General Fund to cover rising costs and fund projects like the Midway Mall, MARCS, and the 6119 sewer initiative.

Time to replace Riddell — and if not indicted or recalled, then Moore and Gallagher next. Wasteful spending, outside legal fees, and lack of transparency have plagued the county administration. Thank God there are still honest people fulfilling public records requests.

This November: VOTE NO on the 0.25% sales tax increase.