

April 2, 2014

Mayor Jensen and Assembly,

I am writing to you now as a citizen, tax payer, business owner and baby boomer.

I am so disappointed the sales tax committee failed to approve what I thought was a good compromise: limiting the sales tax exemption for seniors to home heating fuel and WIC approved groceries. It seemed to satisfy what most testimony was asking for – looking out for the senior poor. I would like to ask you to consider placing the question on the ballot this fall. I feel strongly this is in the best interest of Petersburg.

As you know, you only have property tax and sales tax to fund the budget. The senior population is growing faster now that the Baby Boomers are turning 65. This means a decrease in both sales tax and property tax as they qualify for exemptions. The state mandates the property tax forgiveness so you only have control over the sales tax. This has become an entitlement regardless of need.

This compromise has many advantages; one being that only grocery stores and fuel suppliers have to deal with the exemption cards. That will please many business owners. The WIC approved groceries are the basics – milk, eggs, fruit, vegetables, whole grains, etc. This WIC list is already programmed into grocery store registers so it easy for them to separate tax and non-tax items. And, as usual, all seniors will get 10% off all their groceries every Tuesday. This is a store policy separate from any sales tax decision. This is standard around the country.

I hope you will place this on a future agenda so it can be on the ballot in the fall. Then the voters can decide the question. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Flint". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Susan Flint