



<http://www.nojailtax.org/>

PRESS RELEASE....PRESS RELEASE....PRESS RELEASE....PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE.....Monday, September 10, 2007

**FOR INFORMATION CONTACT.....Suhith Wickrema...513-708-6740
Dan La Botz.....513-600-9405**

**NO JAIL TAX PAC SAYS, “NO FEDERAL PRISONERS IN COUNTY JAIL;”
“INVEST IN PEOPLE, NOT JAILS”**

No Jail Tax PAC, the grassroots citizens’ political action committee that led the fight to defeat the jail tax proposed on the ballot last November, will oppose the jail tax again in this coming election, according to spokesman Suhith Wickrema, a social worker who lives in Cincinnati.

Wickrema said that No Jail Tax PAC opposes using the Hamilton County Jail to house Federal prisoners. “We need to change our policies and improve administration of the current jail facility,” said Wickrema. “We do not need a new jail if we stop housing Federal prisoners, create a night court, take measures to help those who cannot afford even \$100 bail, and stop sending people with mental health and substance abuse problems to jail. We ask the Commissioners not to capitulate to the pressure of Simon Leis by ratifying the policy of housing federal prisoners in our county jail.”

No Jail Tax PAC has announced that it will enter the fight against the jail tax proposed by County Sheriff Simon Leis, and County Commissions David Pepper and Todd Portune with the slogan “Invest in people, not jails.” Wickrema said, “Our slogans are ‘Schools, Not Jails’ and ‘Mental Health, Not Jails’ and ‘Senior Care not Jails.’ We believe that we need to invest in the physical and social infrastructure to improve our community and to prevent crime.”

No Jail Tax PAC has argued that Leis, Pepper and Portune are proposing a jail that is not necessary to be financed by a tax that is regressive and falls most heavily on those with low incomes. “Leis, Pepper and Portune have altered the proposal put forward last year by County Commissioner Phil Heimlich,” said Wickrema, “but they have not substantially improved it. They would put more mental health and substance abuse programs in our jails when we need them in our communities to keep people out of jail.”

Dan La Botz, a professor at a local university and a spokesman for Cincinnati Progressive Action, argues that building a new Hamilton County Jail makes no sense. “We have a city and a county with a declining population,” says La Botz, “so why do we need to increase the number of jail beds by hundreds? We need to be putting the emphasis in Cincinnati and Hamilton County on improving the educational system, lowering our high school dropout rate, and creating jobs with living wages.”

Cincinnati Progressive Action (CPA) was the moving force in the establishment of the No Jail Tax PAC.