

MASW Lawsuit Leads to Withdrawal Of Ballot Initiative for Sales and Use Tax for Transportation

(JEFFERSON CITY, MO) The Missouri Association for Social Welfare (MASW) today received word that supporters of a petition initiative for a funding scheme dedicated to transportation projects have withdrawn their petition from the Secretary of State's Office. The group called Missourians for Safe Transportations and New Jobs had planned to circulate petitions in order to place a one cent sales and one cent use tax on the ballot in 2014. The tax would have lasted at least ten years. MASW had filed a petition in Cole County Circuit Court on Nov. 25, 2013, challenging the ballot language published on the Secretary of State's website.

"This is an important victory for transparency and fairness," said Jeanette Mott Oxford, executive director of MASW. "The ballot language contained many misleading phrases that could have pulled the wool over the eyes of voters. We believe proponents of the measure saw from the strength of our case that we were going to prevail and gave up, at least for this year."

Oxford said that MASW does support adequate state investment in the common good, including roads, ports, bridges, and public transit. The organization endorses other means to pay for transportation needs, including:

- A better designed fuel tax, updated to equal its purchasing power when last increased and adjusted for inflation annually; and
- A progressive redesign of Missouri's outdated, unfair, and inadequate income tax system. Income brackets for Missouri individual income tax have not been updated since 1931. Rep. Judy Morgan (D-Kansas City) is expected to file legislation to make needed changes within the next week.

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Missouri Association for Social Welfare (MASW)
606 E. Capitol Avenue, Jefferson City, MO 65101
573-634-2901, x301; joxford@masw.org
www.masw.org