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BARROW OPPOSES PROPOSAL S

Candidate Criticizes No-Bid Contracts, Non-Accountability, Out-of State Contractors and Transfers to Charter School Competitors

DETROIT. October 21, 2009 --- In a joint news conference with the numerous community groups today, Mayoral Candidate Tom Barrow declared his opposition to Proposal S, the millage extension, which would raise \$500-million for the construction of eight new schools and the modernization of 10 others. Barrow expressed his concern as to how the money would be spent under the leadership of the DPS Emergency Financial Manager Robert Bobb given his over-reliance of no-bid, out-of-state contractors and his ability to operate without oversight.

“Proposal S is just Mr. Bing’s and Bobb’s way of getting Detroiters to fund private charter schools using public money under the guise of helping our kids,” said Barrow. “It is the privatizing of Detroit Public Schools disguised as a millage extension. These outsiders, neither of which are Detroiters, must not be allowed to transfer our tax dollars to their outsider corporate friends in the form of multi-million dollar, no-bid contracts.”

“Detroiters need to show they care about our children’s future and the future of our city and vote this proposal down,” he declared. “I have supported every millage since I reached voting age but this is one that I cannot support in good conscious.”

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“This proposal is just Bobb’s surreptitious way of finding public dollars to give to outside companies for construction, accounting, legal and other services which Detroiters and Michiganders should be providing,” said Barrow. “You won’t find any Detroiters on those job sites and Mr. Bobb must be more sensitive to Detroit’s economy and not the local economies of his friends and cronies. In Bobb’s view, Detroit’s only leader is Interim Mayor Bing to the dismissal of all others.”

Barrow questioned why Bobb is closing down schools yet wants to build new ones. “We need a comprehensive population plan that should include planning departments, the U.S. Census and other vital agencies to ensure that school closings and new construction match how the city will grow,” declared Barrow, 60.

Bobb was recently criticized for awarding millions in no-bid contracts including almost \$1 million to his former employer, Philadelphia-based Public Financial Management Inc., to provide accounting services to the DPS. He has also given millions of dollars in contracts to companies from Berkley, Calif.; Washington, DC; New York City; Alexandria, VA; and Florissant, MO.

“Where are the Detroit companies on those lists?” questioned Barrow, a municipal finance expert himself. “He doesn’t care about the education of our most important asset, our children despite his pretenses. He just wants to keep his out-of-state buddies happy with our tax money when it is needed desperately here to build up our local economy,” added Barrow.

Barrow also criticized Bobb’s focus on charter schools, declaring that the real intention of Proposal S is to use the bond funds to make capital improvements and build new schools just to transfer the facilities later to private corporations that run charter schools.

“My goal is to have the Detroit Public School system show improvements so it can compete with private schools...and win...not fund its competitors,” said Barrow. “Bobb and Bing can’t keep giving away our assets to outsiders and think Detroiters can’t see it. He hasn’t so much as said a single word to me as the man who would be Detroit’s next mayor,” Barrow said.

Barrow cited numerous now closed schools with new energy efficient windows, gyms and roofs which had been improved under the previous 1995 \$1.5 billion bond issue as an example in his speech. “These schools got new windows and other structural improvements under the last bond proposal but they now sit closed. That is simply unacceptable,” said Barrow.

To learn more about Tom Barrow and his platform, call 9-BARROW or visit his Web site at TomBarrowforMayor.com.

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