

Distressed Unit Appeals Board
Attn: Stephanie Russo
200 West Washington Street
State House Room 215
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Stephanie Russo,

December 12, 2008

I am a concern citizen opposed to the appeal that the city of Gary is filing with the Indiana Distressed Unit Appeals Board. I find it repulsive that this administration would be asking for relief while Mayor Clay continues to drive a Hummer, a non-economical gas guzzling vehicle at the taxpayers' expense which is equivalent to the CEO's of the big 3 automakers coming to Washington in their corporate jets asking Congress for a bailout, and his mismanaging the Sanitary district, whereas we are now paying double sewer rates. He got billboards of himself all over the city and I wonder who's paying for that advertising. The council members seem like they are misguided politicians who are simply giving away money irresponsibly and taking unnecessary trips at taxpayers' expense and have the audacity to say "they will continue to do so" as if the city has money to throw away.

It is appalling the Gary city council actually have what amounts to be a "perk" account with thousand of dollars at their disposal. They obviously failed to list this matter in the relief application. I "DO NOT" want to continue to finance the perks and gross mismanagement of this administration. It is not fair that the property owners in Gary whom are already paying some of the highest property taxes in the state should be punished for the mismanagement of the City of Gary. May I remind the Distress Board what our own Governor Daniels stated, "Gary's financial crisis is not the result of the property tax caps." Therefore, the caps should not be the basis to solve Gary's financial crisis. The property tax caps were put in place by state lawmakers who joined Governor Daniels in response to a tax payers revolt last year for "LOWER PROPERTY TAXES" not higher. No one likes the idea of layoffs or cuts, but Gary must streamline more of government into efficient use of the allotted funds under the caps. Therefore, there should not be "No Bailout for Gary! I am oppose to higher property taxes." "KEEP THE TAX CAPS IN PLACE " Thank you.

A Concerned Taxpayer
Joseph Leajin Sr.
4409 East 12th Place
Gary, IN 46403
219-938-8406
ELNERJoseph@SBCGLOBAL.NET

HAS GARY "CUT
TO THE BONE" AS
MAYOR CLAY CLAIMS?

NO! NO! NO!
OBVIOUSLY NOT!!
LOOK

FORCE GARY TO
EXIST AS EVERY
OTHER CITY IN
THE STATE -
WITHIN ITS TAX
BUDGET - NO
EXCEPTIONS - NO
MORE MONEY!!

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

P.S.
CUT LAKE COUNTY
SOME MORE TOO!!

Government Offices City — Continued

Housing Coordinator 401 Broadway Gary 46402	881-1380
Board Of Public Works And Safety	
City Atty's Office 401 Broadway Gary 46402	881-1310
City Clerk	881-1400
Civil 401 Broadway Gary 46402	881-1354
Criminal 1301 Broadway Gary 46407	881-1263
City Court Judges Offices 1301 Broadway 46407	881-1271
Civil	881-1357
Probation Dept 1710 Broadway 46407	881-4771
City Engrs Ofc 401 Broadway 46402	881-1366
City Hall Maintenance Dept 401 Broadway Gary 46402	881-1414
City Sealers Ofc 1100 Massachusetts Gary 46407	881-5205
Commission On Status Of Women	
Commission On Status Of Women	
475 Broadway Gary 46402	883-411
Ark Shelter For Homeless Women & Their Children	
445 Connecticut Gary 46402	882-007
Rainbow Shelter For Battered Women Gary 46402	886-161
Common Council 407 Broadway Gary 46402	881-131
Communications & Electronics	
1128 Massachusetts Gary 46407	881-526
Comptrollers Office 401 Broadway Gary 46402	881-136
Insurance Dept 401 Broadway Gary 46402	881-137
Purchasing 401 Broadway Gary 46402	881-134
Credit Union 401 Broadway Gary 46402	881-132
Data Processing 401 Broadway Gary 46402	881-132
Dept Of Redevelopment 100 W 4th Av Gary 46402	886-153
Division Of Physical And Economic Development	
475 Broadway Gary 46402	881-522
EAP Program 504 Broadway Gary 46402	883-140
Emergency Referral Serv 1100 Massachusetts Gary 46407	886-305
Fire Department To Report A Fire	91
Business	881-477
EMS Director 200 E 5th Ave Gary	881-528
Fire Prev & Insp 200 E 5th Ave	881-522
Non Emergency 1301 Broadway 46407	881-478
Gary Prosecutors Office	
Criminal Division 1301 Broadway Gary 46407	881-126
Gary Youth Services Bureau 1741 Broadway Gary 46407	881-527
General Services Department	
900 Madison Gary 46402	882-844
Complaints/General Services 900 Madison Gary 46402	885-118
Sanitation 900 Madison Gary 46402	885-841
Garbage Pick Up 900 Madison Gary 46402	883-351
Street Sweeping 900 Madison Gary 46402	882-844
Health & Human Services 475 Broadway Gary 46402	881-527
Health Dept 1145 W 5th Av Gary 46402	882-556
Health Dept	
Children & Youth Clinic	
1145 W 5th Av Gary 46402	882-111
Housing Conservation 824 Broadway Gary 46402	883-310
Board Up 900 Madison Gary 46402	881-529
Demolition Program 824 Broadway Gary 46402	883-310
Insurance Dept 401 Broadway 46402	881-317
Human Relations 475 Broadway Gary 46402	883-411
Anti Redlining 475 Broadway Gary 46402	881-522
Mayor's Office 401 Broadway Gary 46402	881-1301
Deputy Mayor 401 Broadway Gary 46402	881-1308
Office Of Complaints & Information	
900 Madison Gary 46402	885-1185
Personnel 401 Broadway Gary 46402	881-1346
Public Affairs 401 Broadway 46402	881-1314
Special Events 401 Broadway Gary 46402	881-1312
Mayor's Office Of Urban Conservation	
Park Department 455 Massachusetts Gary 46402	886-7113
Main Office 100 W 4th Av Gary 46402	886-1531
Park Department	
Administration 455 Massachusetts Gary 46402	886-7102
Aetna Park Davl 4265 E 11th Gary 46403	938-6161
Borman Square 7 Av & Madison Gary 46402	885-8101
Brunswick Center 775 Clark Rd Gary 46406	944-1595
Carolina 13 Av & Carolina Gary 46402	885-8301
Glenn Ryan Park 4220 E 6th Pl Gary 46303	938-3283
Golf Pro 32 Av Gary 46408	980-1089
Green's Superintendent 3400 Jefferson Gary 46408	980-8709
Howe Gary 46409	887-9369
Hudson-Campbell Sports & Fitness Center	
455 Massachusetts Gary 46402	886-7099
Ironwood 1119 E 24th Av Gary 46402	881-5228
Jackson Park Pavilion 350 Jackson Gary 46402	882-2527
M C Bennett Pavilion 2504 Grant Gary 46404	944-8512
Marquette Pavilion	
Grand Blvd & Marquette Dr Gary 46403	938-7362
North Gleason Park 301 W 30th Av Gary 46409	980-2562
North Gleason Pavilion 301 W 30th Av Gary 46409	884-2706
Pachter Park 2243 Whitcomb Gary 46404	944-7228
Park Garage 19 Av & Madison Gary 46402	883-7217
Pittman 303 E 51st Av Gary 46409	980-3814
Roosevelt 21 Av & Harrison Gary 46407	883-9408
Tennis Courts 33rd Gary 46409	884-5748
Tolleston 1709 Ellsworth Pl Gary 46404	944-0618
Washington 13 Av & Pennsylvania Dr Gary 46407	883-9739
Westbrook 2768 Waverly Dr Gary 46404	949-1268
Planning & Community Development 475 Broadway 46402	881-5075
Planning & Economic Development 504 Broadway 46402	881-5235
Police Dept	
Bureau Of Uniform Services	
Patrol Division	881-1256
Commander Traffic Division	881-1254
Hit And Run Section	881-1217
Auxiliary Police	881-1221
Bureau Of Investigation Services	
Detective Division	881-1209
Juvenile Aid Division	881-1209
Auto Detail Division	881-1231
Victim Assistance Unit	881-1224
Office Of The Chief Of Police	
Internal Affairs Division	881-1244
Training Division	881-1252
Public Information Officer	881-1213
Technical Services Bureau	
Records Division	881-1226
Accident Report Section	881-1217
Desk Sergeant	881-1214
Report Clerk	881-1221
Bureau Of Identification	881-1247
Maintenance Manager	881-1253
Motor Transportation Div	881-5210
Communication Division	
Non-Emergency	881-1260
Hotline-Anonymous	881-1280
General Information	881-1214

Government Offices City — Continued

Police Community Relations	
824 Broadway Gary 46402	881-52
Gary Police Civil Service Commission	
900 Madison Gary 46402	882-43
Police Chaplains Corp	881-12
Project Outreach	881-12
Prosecutor	
1301 Broadway Gary 46407	881-12
Public Safety Director	886-28
Risk Management 401 Broadway Gary 46402	881-13
Traffic Engineer 1000 Madison Gary 46402	881-52
Vehicle Maintenance 1305 W 11th Av 46402	882-40
Fuel Station 1000 Madison Gary 46402	881-02
Vital Statistics 1145 W 5th Av Gary 46402	882-55

City Court 2301 E Columbus Dr	391-8491
Cafeteria Court	391-8489
Gary City Of	391-8490
General Info 401 Broadway Gary 46402	881-1300
Air Pollution 504 Broadway Gary 46402	882-3000
Animal Control Center 625 W 9th Pl Gary 46402	885-7507
Bldg Commissioner 401 Broadway Gary 46402	881-1377

Continued next page

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City Purchasing Agent 1443 119th Whiting 46394-659-770
Continued next column

Russo, Stephanie

From: William Coward [williamcoward01@att.net]
Sent: Saturday, December 13, 2008 10:03 PM
To: Russo, Stephanie; wilma r wilson
Subject: miss use of tax payer money

To whom it may concern,

If the city of Gary is in a bind for money, I bet it is because they think it is going to be business as usual from now on, and that they do not have to tighten their belts, like all the other cities in the state. With the cuts that they have made, they can see a lot of waste. And when the city is made to cut a little more like the rest of the cities have, a little more waste will be exposed. If the city is in a bind for cash, why do they continue to loan city vehicles, with city gasoline to city police, city police reserves, city judge, and a host of other city employees, for every day use in their private lives? I wonder how much money the city would save if all city owned vehicles stayed on the job. It might be sour grapes, but I for one am tired of seeing Gary squad cars, and other city vehicles all over the place, when the people are off the clock, and the city has no money! I am a concerned law abiding tax paying citizen of Gary, and have been for a very long time. As such I think I have a right to complain just a bit. I can see a lot more waste in the city too, I just do not wish to take too much of your time.

Sincerely, Bill Coward.

Russo, Stephanie

From: Karen Oliver [karensoliver@yahoo.com]
Sent: Saturday, December 13, 2008 2:49 PM
To: Russo, Stephanie
Subject: City of Gary Tax Appeal

I am writing in response to Gary's appeal for more tax money in 2009 that would result in the elimination of the newly implemented Indiana property tax cap.

We have lived in Gary for over 50 years and have seen the City continually waste tax payer money and make decisions based on personal benefit. It is time the City of Gary learns to live within their financial constraints and stop requesting special treatment. We are all in a financial crisis due to the dire state of the nation's economy and current soaring unemployment throughout the area.

The taxpayers of Gary **"DO NOT SUPPORT THIS APPEAL"**. We do not want higher taxes. If Mayor Rudy Clay cannot work with the millions of dollars allotted to him, he should resign from office.

You must deny this appeal and make the City of Gary once and for all responsible for the years of waste and financial mis-management.

Wouldn't this be a great time for the state to stop the bleeding and take over the responsibilities of running the city so that Gary can once again be the "beautiful city by the lake".

Russo, Stephanie

From: ALEXIS BANKS [alexis.banks@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Saturday, December 13, 2008 11:43 AM
To: Russo, Stephanie
Subject: Do not "bail out" Gary

As a resident of Gary, I strongly urge not to "bail out" the city of Gary. Mayor Rudy Clay has not done much in the way of reducing his inflated budget. He wants to lay off police and fire, yet city hall is so overstaffed, so much so, that it is ridiculous at the least. He drives around in a Hummer with a driver at taxpayer's expenses yet he wants help from the state. He gives family and friends city jobs that they are not qualified for. I as a taxpayer am tired of paying what I consider way too high of property taxes in Gary for two properties, while there are many who do not pay taxes at all because they filed a "not for profit" status and are not even qualified for it. But the powers that may be help them receive this status.

Alexis Banks

316 South Henry St

Gary, In. 46403

219-680-7845

Russo, Stephanie

From: Homehab@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, December 14, 2008 8:47 PM
To: Russo, Stephanie
Cc: quickly@post-trib.com
Subject: Gary Town Hall Meeting Regarding taxes

PLEASE don't give in to the City of Gary's appeal for tax relief. They have had years to get their house in order. Force the tax caps like the rest of the state. Force Lake County to implement the additional 1% sales tax if necessary. I own a house in Gary which I rent. I paid \$50,000.00 for it a few years ago. It is assessed at \$102,100.00. I pay \$5,886.64 in real estate taxes. Another year of this taxation and I will lose the house to the bank. I am 67 and cannot retire because of the excessive tax burden placed on me and others in the City of Gary. Please force them to become efficient, cut the waste and do the job they are paid to do right.

Sincerely, David Bonander

Make your life easier with all your friends, email, and favorite sites in one place. [Try it now.](#)

Russo, Stephanie

From: jgerber724@earthlink.net
Sent: Sunday, December 14, 2008 7:29 PM
To: Russo, Stephanie
Subject: Gary's Appeal for Property Tax Relief

As residents of Gary, we urge the Distressed Unit Appeal Board to demand detailed evidence of steps already taken by the City to curtail duplication of services, to eliminate excessive administrative and non-critical staffing, to halt wasteful spending on ill-conceived projects and to institute plans for improved over-sight in an effort to eliminate wide-spread incompetence.

In a City with minimal transparency, we have seen little change from 'business as usual' other than threats to curtail essential services or plans to 'tax' them by imposing new fees.

John & Jennifer Gerber
9421 Lake Shore Drive
Gary, IN 46403

Russo, Stephanie

From: Robert Collins [collinsjvi@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Sunday, December 14, 2008 1:34 PM
To: Russo, Stephanie
Subject: City of Gary proposed "bail out"

12/14/08

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

We, as residents and business owners in Gary for over two decades, are in COMPLETE OPPOSITION to any fiscal "bail out" for the city of Gary.

The Gary city council has already allotted two million dollars for cash handouts to their "cronies" for 2009. As an example of such corruption, see Post-Tribune article of 12/14/08 by Jon Seidel entitled, "Taxpayer Cash Safe, Glen Park developer says."

We feel that the tax caps should be implemented as written in law and further request that the General Assembly make these TAX CAPS PERMANENT!

Robert & Loretta Collins
DBA Joint Venture Investment

Russo, Stephanie

From: Jan Belles [jebelles@comcast.net]
Sent: Sunday, December 14, 2008 12:44 PM
To: Russo, Stephanie
Subject: Bailout of City of Gary

Ms. Russo:

I feel I have to comment on the bailout requested by the city of Gary. I live in Hobart and will try to keep this comment brief.

Before any approval of funds for Gary, I do believe a team of forensic accountants/auditors need to be sent to Gary for the confirmation of the budget numbers that were submitted. If Rudy Clay (I am sorry, but I cannot give him the proper respect of the office of Mayor) can hire and pay his son \$25,000 for "photography" and also hire a friend at \$45,000/year "to clean up the city", I find it hard to believe any of the numbers that have been submitted.

The once thriving business area of Gary is nothing more than boarded up empty buildings. I NEVER drive through Gary at night and rarely in the daylight hours. It is just not safe and Clay is threatening to cut the number of police officers if he does not receive help from the IDUA Board?

PLEASE, the corruption that is the City of Gary's government, Gary School Board and Lake County Government has to be addressed before even one dollar of the taxpayers' money is used for bailout.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my concerns.

Janice Belles
9249 Norris Drive
Hobart, IN 46342
jebelles@comcast.net

December 15, 2008

Indiana Office of Management and Budget
200 West Washington Street #212
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Indiana Appeals Board:

I am writing to oppose the Appeals Board granting of the City of Gary's request for relief from the one percent cap on property taxes and to allow the city to raise property taxes on the citizens of Gary.

I believe the city of Gary is in this position because of mismanagement of government funds by the administration - starting with the former Mayor Scott King and continuing with the current Mayor Rudy Clay.

In an editorial published in the Post Tribune today, it stated that it isn't the city's fault it (the city) won't have enough revenue to operate it's business; well, it certainly isn't the fault of the citizens of Gary.

Over one third of the houses in Gary are vacant and boarded up, one third of the residents homes are on the tax rolls for non-payment of property taxes and raising taxes on the remaining few people (most of whom are elderly on fixed incomes or out of work) will cause them to either flee the city or have their homes added to the tax rolls for non-payment of property taxes.

What happened to the revenue the city of Gary was receiving from the casino boats? Why is the city not receiving revenue from the operation of that white elephant (the baseball stadium) on fifth avenue? Scott King worked out that deal. Why should the burden of bailing out this city be placed on the shoulders of the Citizens? The administration created this mess, so let the administration find its own way out of it.

Sincerely,



Helen Henderson
Resident of the once great City of Gary

12-14-08

Dear Mr. Kitchell

% In. Distressed Unit appeals Bd.

We in Gary, especially the miller area, have had a nightmare on our hands since the law changed in 2001 to market value. After gaining support for caps after years of frustration, we are now looking at the appeals process. First we had to go through the yearly new trending procedure. We also in Lake County have to live with a county council & commissioners who would not pass a county income tax.

I have a home, a business, and other real estate, in Gary and have had for a long time. Since 2002 we have had to give up a lot to keep all of this due to real estate taxes. We have had increases on all of the above from 300 to 700%. I have testified before the state reps & senators at hearings.

We finally see a little relief starting in 2009 on our vacant property, our business & our home and the city decides they are broke. Believe me, the city was broke years ago but like a lot of people they just ignored it, made terrible decisions and continued to spend. There is little management at the department level, turn over and of course a new mayor. There is no control or follow up on money given out for boards, contracts or grants or special studies. Guidelines for bids are not followed up.

Please see the recent exposure by Post Tribune on monies given to each council district each year. This refers to the Glen Park councilman. It's a joke and over \$1/2 million each yr!

Please weigh carefully the requests to add additional real estate taxes to Gary when finally we maybe can make a come back in our area

Thank you for your time & effort

Sincerely,

Jerome L. Pickford
9001 Lake Shore Drive, Gary, IN 46403

Miss Ommal!

REGION

Taxpayer cash safe, Glen Park developer sa

City grant recipient says attorney under indictment never had access to money.

By Jon Seidel

Post-Tribune staff writer

GARY — The man who has accepted nearly \$180,000 from City Council President Romer Scott to revitalize Glen Park says his federally indicted attorney never had access to taxpayer money.

Jerry Haymon, the leader of several housing assistance agencies including the Glen Park Coalition of Concern, K&L Consultants and Priced Right Construction LLC, said he rarely even spoke to William Crabtree II about his work.

"He just had access to our mail," Haymon said of Crabtree, a Schererville attorney accused of embezzling money from his clients.

Haymon contacted the Post-Tribune weeks after it reported that he forgot about accepting \$104,000 from the Gary City Council. He said he couldn't be reached earlier because of a family emergency.

Then he sat down to answer questions about Crabtree, a name he renovated in Glen Park. A large cash withdrawal came from his bank account depositing \$75,000 in pub-

"I keep it vague for a reason," Haymon said. "I don't like people stealing my programs."

Cash withdrawals

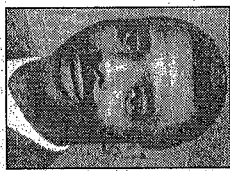
Since 2004, Haymon's Coalition of Concern accepted several donations from Scott, the last of which came in the form of a \$75,000 grant in September 2007. The grant documents outline few spending rules, but they required Haymon to submit bank statements to the city controller's office until the money ran out.

Haymon submitted bank statements that detail account activity between September and December 2007. They show his grant money was tossed into a larger pot, where more than \$600,000 in cash withdrawals were made in four months.

Another \$157,000 in checks were written out to "cash" from that bank account, the records show.

Haymon said those were actually cashiers checks, written out to clients of the Coalition of Concern's down-payment assistance housing program. Indeed, nearly all of Haymon's checks for "cash" mention "down payment" or "cashiers check" in the memo line.

A representative of Citizens Financial Bank, where Haymon deposited the money, confirmed that a cashiers check would appear as a cash withdrawal on



a client's bank statements. "We have to show a record of the gifts that were given," Haymon said.

The rest of Haymon's public money came in the form of six checks between 2004 and 2007. While Haymon didn't submit bank statements to document his spending of that money, he said it's outlined on the Coalition of Concern's federal tax returns.

The bulk of that money, \$91,000, was directed to the Coalition of Concern in 2005. According to its 2005 tax returns, it spent a total of \$1.7 million that year, including \$924,612 in consulting fees, \$41,000 to subcontractors, \$31,000 in legal damages and \$715,505 in downpayment assistance grants.

Just donations

Haymon said the payments to subcontractors were actually donations to other local nonprofits.

All of the consulting fees, tax records show, went to Haymon's own K&L Real Estate, based in the same Merrillville office as the Coalition of Concern. That money funded payroll and counseling programs.

Haymon said, for clients participating in the down-payment assistance program.

"There was a lot of work done through K&L to prepare these people," Haymon said. "The seminars were actually conducted through K&L."

A portion of the \$75,000 City Council grant, Haymon said, was used to buy, renovate and sell a home in the 4000 block of Tennessee Street.

Haymon's Priced Right Construction bought the home for \$12,000 in January, according to sales disclosure forms in the office of the Calumet Township assessor, and he said the Coalition spent another \$3,000 in research before making that purchase.

When a reporter knocked on the door there in October, a man named "Paul" answered and said he'd never heard of the Coalition of Concern. He referred to Haymon as his landlord, and he said he met Haymon through a mutual friend.

Haymon said Paul's rent checks went to K&L Consultants, and he insists his tenant went through a formal review. "He did get screened," Haymon said. "Maybe he didn't realize that there was a screening process."

However, Haymon said the deal with Paul hasn't worked out. The house has now been sold to Georgia M. Atkinson of Merrillville, who declined to speak to

the Post-Tribune for this story. A settlement statement from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development shows Priced Right received about \$49,000 from the sale after paying taxes and other costs from the transaction.

"We paid all her closing costs," Haymon said. Renovations at the house cost about \$30,000, Haymon said, leaving a \$4,000 profit for his various agencies to use to buy four more houses.

"Everything that Priced Right does goes to the Coalition," Haymon said.

Federal charges

Priced Right's registered agent is Crabtree, who is facing two counts of wire fraud and one count of mail fraud. A federal grand jury accused Crabtree in October of embezzling money from one of his clients to pay back another client.

Crabtree, who pleaded not guilty, hasn't returned several calls from the Post-Tribune. Additional charges are expected to be filed against Crabtree sometime this month, court records show.

The Indiana Supreme Court's Disciplinary Commission also filed a motion to have Crabtree's law license suspended, including piles of bank records as evidence. None of those records seem

to directly involve Right or the Coalition, and Haymon tree's involvement was minimal. "He's never had financial transaction said.

Review 'forthcom

When asked last Crabtree's involvement in Haymon's agency it was all "news to me." A month after it was first reported he's only spoken "sparingly" to learn how the tax money spent.

"My concern is I Scott said. "Make program is a success. No tangible quality that such Scott said he only as many properties returned to G Street.

Nonetheless, Scott to take another to the Coalition of handled nearly \$ money.

"We want to follow up and Scott said. "That's including, most definitely." Contact Jon S 3148 or jseidel@p

John E. Vinzant
8937 Lake Shore Drive
Gary, IN 46403
219-938-1997
219-942-9544 Office
john.vinzant@vinzantsoftware.com

December 15, 2008

Stephanie N. Russo
Executive Assistant to Ryan Kitchell & Chris Ruhl
Indiana Office of Management and Budget
State House Room 215
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Ms Russo;

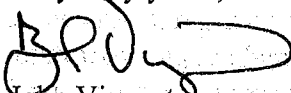
I'm writing to weigh in on the City of Gary's petition to the DUAB. It seems to me outrageous that the City of Gary is requesting a bail-out instead of taking positive steps to put its financial house in order. The City of Gary spends money like there's no tomorrow, and in spite of its protestations of belt tightening has yet to meaningfully reduce the number of people on its payroll. Also, a modest payroll reduction measure (20% hourly wage cut) taken in the fall has just been reversed by the mayor – voluntarily.

The simple issue is that current city management refuses to reduce spending and the size of non-public-safety payroll. The layers of administration and duplication of responsibility in this city are ridiculous. For example, we have 3 different departments doing economic development! Mayor Clay is counting on a bailout so he can keep from having to trim payroll. You want waste? Did you know that Mayor Clay is chauffeured in a brand new city-purchased Hummer?

Instead of asking the DUAB for a bail-out to support Gary's spending habits, we should be asking: If a fair rate of tax charged upon fair market value assessments yields insufficient funding to support government operations, isn't it time to consider a different form of government? Maybe consolidation? Just a thought. If DUAB could force that – then we'd have something!

Please extend to Mr. Ryan and Mr. Ruhl my hope that the DUAB will stand firm in protecting the rights of Gary taxpayers against the City of Gary's request for a bail-out. We can no longer afford to support its spending habit.

Very truly yours,


John Vinzant

CC: Governor Mitch Daniels

Russo, Stephanie

From: mduguerre@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, December 16, 2008 4:25 PM
To: Russo, Stephanie
Subject: Gary DUAB

Members of the Distressed Unit Appeals Board;

As a citizen and small business owner of Gary, Indiana, I am opposed to raising the tax caps for property owners in Gary.

USX Steel sits on 7 square miles of prime lakefront, if they were taxed fairly their burden should at least reflect what lakefront owners in Miller Beach have to pay in taxes, let alone what other heavy industries in surrounding areas pay in taxes.

I attended the unveiling of Rudy Clay's DUAB plan last night, and while I appreciate the efforts that city controller Carlita Green has made toward cutting/consolidating city services and staffs, I do NOT trust the current Mayor to handle a positive DUAB decision responsibly.

This current administration needs to put politics aside and press for greater taxation of the steel mill, pass the 1% income tax and LEGITIMATELY pursue new revenue sources including business development - to further burden homeowners with onerous taxes is unacceptable.

Thank you,

Mary Dugger
Yellow House, LLC
101 N. Hancock
Gary, IN 46402

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Russo, Stephanie

From: Kurt Weiss [KWEISS@mbakercorp.com]
Sent: Tuesday, December 16, 2008 1:44 PM
To: Russo, Stephanie
Subject: Gary Distressed Unit Appeal

Greetings,

My name is Kurt Weiss and I am a resident of Gary and also own a few low-income, rehabilitated rental units. I am writing to oppose the City's recent submittal to the Distressed Unit Appeals Board. I understand you are very busy so I will try to keep this letter short, despite that fact that there are numerous reasons why our current "leaders" should not be allowed to continue their fiscal and managerial irresponsibility. First: I believe that over the years our city turned away from providing essential services to simply becoming an employment base for a group of connected individuals who are incapable, unable and/or unwilling to actually do the work required with any semblance of fiscal responsibility. Even with the imminent need to cut the city budget, these "insiders" have waited until the last minute to even consider planning for the future. Secondly: the recently instituted tax caps are supposed to help stimulate out economy - not only by freeing up the income of residents, but also by making real estate sales and property rehabilitation more attractive. If taxes in Gary are higher than surrounding communities, why would anyone want to live or own property there? The result of relaxing the caps, even for four years, will result in more abandonments and, ultimately, even LESS tax revenues than if the caps were left in place (simple math, not fuzzy). Make no mistake - Gary is a city of renters, and if landlords cannot afford taxes, or cannot raise rents enough to compensate, they and their tenants will simply move elsewhere. I live and work here and have seen it happening over the past few years as the tax rates on rental properties have hit nearly 8% of the assessed valuations! We cannot take even one more year in the red! Finally, as evidenced by our Mayor and Council not bothering to let us view (let alone contribute to) their submittal until it was already submitted, we as citizens obviously are given minimal consideration. Their only concern seems to be keeping what they can for themselves and their own cronies and families. Is this considered "making progress?" Personally, I don't think so. To summarize: Yes, Gary is "distressed," but our problems cannot be solved by lifting the property tax caps. I believe tax caps, as instituted by the Governor and the State Legislature, offered a glimmer of hope for those of us struggling to rebuild Gary, but now I fear that glimmer will smolder out, as will our once great city. Lower taxes help bring in people and businesses; higher taxes send them away, never to return. I hope you will deny ANY additional taxes above the legislated caps to the City of Gary.

Sincerely,

Kurt Weiss
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