



# Edwardsville/Glen Carbon real estate community urges "yes" vote for Proposition E

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EDWARDSVILLE – The real estate community in the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon area, including the Greater Gateway Association of Realtors, appear to have strong opinions of support for Proposition E.

Proposition E is a referendum on the April ballot that would increase funding for local schools in Edwardsville School District 7 for the first time since 1977. The current tax rate is \$4.22 and would increase to \$4.77 if Prop E passes. Currently, District 7's rate of \$4.22 is the second lowest of all school districts in Madison County and would continue to remain one of the lowest if Prop E passes.

The funding would help restore District 7 to financial stability, to replace aging textbooks, update curricula, upgrade technology and failing security systems, maintain performing arts and athletic programs, eliminate current operational debt, and ensure the district does not lose local control to the state.

The non-payment of budgeted state funding is one of the key factors that put Edwardsville School District 7 in the position of having to ask for a tax referendum.

Julie Fleck has been a Realtor for 14 years and she is with Re/Max Alliance in Edwardsville.

"I think it is important to vote in favor of Proposition E," she said. "I see how my kids benefited from the school system and many of my friends have kids school age who wouldn't have the same opportunities as my kids if it doesn't pass.

"I think it is very important. I just discussed this with one of our clients and none of us want our property values to come down. One of the key reasons people move to the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon area is the school district. If we don't have what we have, I believe it will affect our property values. I have three sets of clients who want to move here, but they are waiting to see what happens with Proposition E before they move to the area. I am sure there are a lot of others waiting to see what happens."

Fleck said she has always admired Edwardsville School District 7 and the way it operates.

"We moved here in 2000 and all three of my kids went through Edwardsville High School and two went to SIUE," she said. "My mom will be 80 this year and she was complaining recently about her property taxes going up. I said to her, 'mom you have to vote yes for this. When it comes time for you to downsize and sell your house, if you vote yes your house will be worth more and it will affect your property value.' She said, 'OK, I will vote yes.'"

Rob Wigton, CEO of the Greater Gateway Association of Realtors, said from the organization's standpoint, "We believe strong schools increase property values. We think this is just a small investment for a future return. That is the conclusion our

government affairs committee came up with. There is such a tremendous school district in Edwardsville and that goes hand in hand with real estate values.

"If something isn't done, we will see the potential impact of losing teachers and programs and the state will take more control of the school. Our growth and demand here are still good. Edwardsville and Glen Carbon are both such desirable places to live. All of Madison County is that way from Godfrey, Alton to Maryville. We want this to be a great place to live and work."

Bev George, a long-time Realtor in the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon area, said Prop E directly impacts our community.

"We want our children to have all the extras that we were fortunate to have as kids," she said. "Economically, it impacts our community because we want Edwardsville/Glen Carbon to continue to be a sought-after district and area for housing, retail, restaurants, parks, etc."

"We have a lot to lose if Prop E does not pass. We all need to get behind this and vote yes for our kids and our community."

Tiffany Paschall has been a Realtor with Brookshire Hathaway HomeServices Elite Properties in Edwardsville. She has been in the real estate business for three years.

"I think this referendum is important for everyone in the community," she said. "It is important to vote yes for property owners to maintain their values, students to continue to receive the quality of education they deserve. Everyone involved in the community will benefit from Proposition E. I think the committee for Prop E has done a good job educating people; I see signs all over town. There has been good turnout and dialogue with the community and the administration has been very transparent."

Paschall is also an Edwardsville alum.

"My ties to this community are very deep and very strong I have been here my entire life," she said. "I come from a family who have served the community in police, fire department and education areas."

Kerry Stricker, Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Junior Service Club Community Relations Chairperson, said she is hearing positive things about the referendum this time around. "I know there has been a more positive push this time. I think people understand it will not only benefit the kids, but it benefits the community," Stricker said. "Even for older people in the community, this will be supporting their grandchildren and their property values overall. I think they are realizing what impact the school district has on the

overall community and area.”Karen Marcus, the Edwardsville Junior Service Club president and Realtor, believes Proposition E will be a great thing for the community. “Economically, it impacts our community because we want Edwardsville/Glen Carbon to be a sought-after district and area for housing, retail, restaurants, parks, etc..” Marcus said. “We have a lot to lose if Prop E does not get passed. We all need to get behind this for our kids and our community.”

Paschall said she takes a lot of pride in District 7 and her hometown.

“There is a reason people want to move to the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon area,” she said. “People are leaving the state of Illinois in record fashion, but people consistently want to move here. It is due to our school system. If people are considering moving here, the very first question they ask is how are the schools. People know this is a good school district and is also a good community with property values.”

“I believe wholeheartedly about Prop E,” Paschall said. “I have never met someone excited to pay more taxes, but this is an investment for people in the community, their home, their schools and their children. It is an investment in the future. I am not ready to explore what happens if it doesn’t pass.”