PRESS RELEASE
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EXPOSED: San Francisco Special Interest Deploys $143,500 to Push $35 Million 30-Year Bonita Springs Property Tax Increase to Buy 6.15 Miles of Polluted Rail Road Dirt

BONITA SPRINGS, FL — Shocking campaign finance filings and public spending disclosures show that the San Francisco-headquartered Trust for Public Land has funneled more than $143,500 into pushing a 30-year, $35 million property tax increase for the Bonita Estero Rail Trail (BERT). The total includes over $61,500 in direct cash and in-kind campaign spending, alongside $82,000 spent funding two real estate appraisals—part of a coordinated effort to secure voter approval of a 30-year, $35 million property tax increase on August 18 before taxpayers can see the property's true value or environmental liabilities.

“Using taxpayer money to promote tax increases is illegal, and this San Francisco Liberal Group should be investigated by the State Ethics Committee for possible Florida campaign violations.” Said Dave Jaye, Chairman of Lee County Taxpayers Association and a longtime Bonita Springs, FL resident.

As voters weigh the high-stakes August 18 referendum, campaign finance disclosures for the pro-tax committee, Vote4BERT2026, reveal that special interest realtors, developers, and speculators are pouring thousands into pushing this tax, which will balloon to over $70 million due to interest and fees. Additionally, CSX Transportation - a key Seminole Gulf Railway partner- injected a $15,000 cash contribution directly into Vote4BERT2026.

A comprehensive review of public records reveals that the City of Bonita Springs effectively outsourced the negotiation of the purchase to outside entities, leading to a staggering $28.6 million price tag for a 6.15-mile railroad corridor that the Lee County Property Appraiser values and taxes at only $378,005.

Records show that the purchase deal was purposefully structured to delay a comprehensive environmental pollution survey and formal real estate appraisals until after the vote. By blockchecksritical due diligence during the election window, proponents are forcing taxpayers to sign a $28.6 million check without knowing the true environmental liabilities or the actual market value of the corridor.

"This is a textbook example of self-dealing," noted Dave Jaye, Chairman of the Lee County Taxpayers Association. "Seminole Gulf Railroad and developers stand to receive tens of millions in taxpayer money while the railroad keeps all future billboard and lease revenue. Meanwhile, Bonita Springs residents would be forced to pay over $70 million in principal and interest. Phase 2 will increase property taxes by over $100 million in future environmental cleanup, removing railroad ties, paving, and constructing bridges over Bonita Beach Road, Old 41, and W. Terry Street."

Key Findings of the Transaction:

The "As-Is" Polluted Dirt Purchase: The $28.6 million price tag only buys 6.15 miles of polluted dirt "As-Is".

Retained Revenue Rights: The Railroad kept the only parts of the land that generate revenue—billboards, commercial leases on the right-of-way, and utility rights—leaving taxpayers with a $6 million revenue hole over the life of the bond.

Massive Phase 2 Cost Overruns: Taxpayers will have to pay over $100 million in higher property taxes to fund Phase 2/3, which includes pollution cleanup, removing railroad ties, paving, lighting, restrooms, and building bridges over major intersections.

Concealed Agreements & Delayed Due Diligence: The purchase and sale agreement was hidden from taxpayers during initial council votes, while formal appraisals and environmental surveys were intentionally delayed until after the election.

"Most of us will be dead when this 30-year property tax debt is still being paid by our Grandchildren," added Jaye. "The Railroad gets the meat and taxpayers get the bone. A 'No' vote on August 18 stops this $70 million tax burden and saves another $100 million in Phase 2 environmental cleanup and construction costs."

Residents can review source documents, executive summaries, the purchase agreement, and a property tax calculator at:

https://usataxfighters.org/bonita-springs-tax-increase-proposal-what-taxpayers-need-to-know/

Campaign finance filings are accessible via:
https://cityofbonitaspringsfl.easyvotecampaignfinance.com/home/publicfilings

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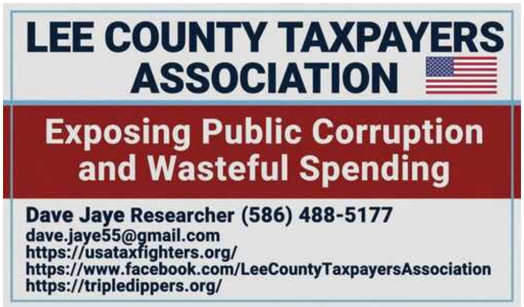
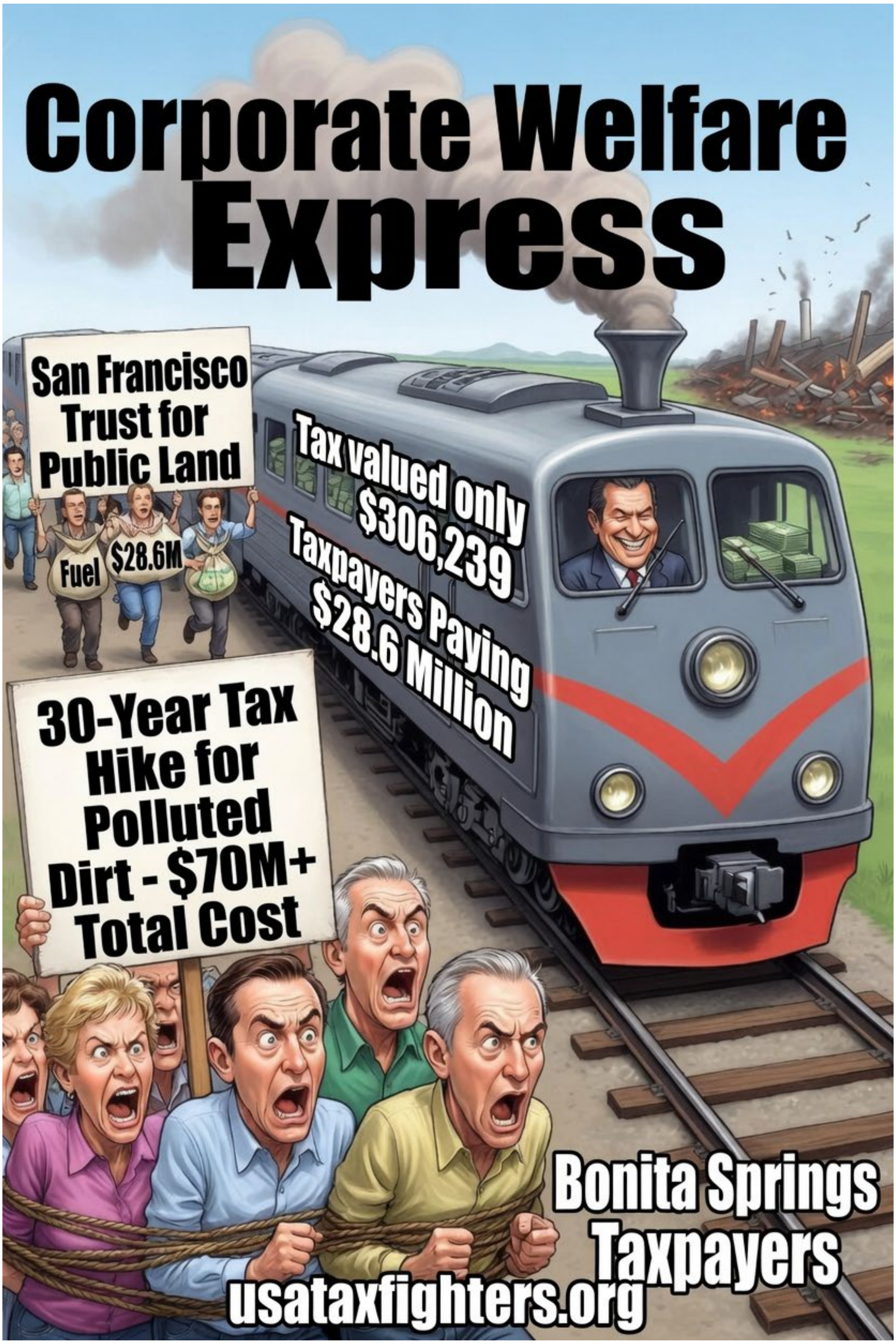



Corporate Welfare for Railroads
- Taxpayers Pay the Price
Trust for
Public Land
(San Francisco)
$28.6
Million
$70 Million+
Property
Tax
Increase
Year
Property
Tax
Increase
6.15 Miles - Appraised $306K


San Francisco Liberals Fund
campaign pushing for 30 year
$70 Million property tax increase.
6.15 miles
worth only
$306K
Corporate
Bailout
$28.6 Million
for
"As is"
6.5 miles of
Polluted dirt
Railroad
Partner
30 Year
Property
Tax Bill
30 Year
Property
Tax Bill
30 Year
Property
Tax Bill


Corporate Welfare Express
San Francisco Trust for Public Land
Fuel
$28.6M
Tax valued only $306,239
Taxpayers Paying $28.6 Million
30-Year Tax Hike for Polluted Dirt - $70M+ Total Cost
Bonita Springs Taxpayers
usataxfighters.org


Classic Corporate Welfare
Keep All Future Revenue
- Taxpayers Get the
Cleanup Bill
17
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PAY TO THE
ORDER OF
$ 28,600,000,00
MEMO.
From San Francisco Liberals via Bonita Springs Taxpayers
usataxfighter.org