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Pinal Regional Transportation Authority (PRTA) Press Release

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Pinal Regional Transportation Authority and Pinal County Respond to Goldwater Institute Lawsuit

APACHE JUNCTION, AZ – Responding to the Goldwater Institute’s lawsuit challenging voter-approved transportation sales tax, Pinal County and the Pinal Regional Transportation Authority (PRTA) filing informs the court that the lawsuit is untimely and without merit.

The case is pending before Judge Chris Whitten in the Maricopa County Superior Court.

After a widely-publicized and debated Special Election on November 7, 2017, Pinal County voters approved a Regional Transportation Plan through Proposition 416 to meet the critical infrastructure needs created by the region’s rapid economic growth and development.

To pay for the plan, voters concurrently approved a transportation excise tax through Proposition 417. The rates and methods for applying the tax were described in the materials sent to voters before the election and the tax goes into effect on April 1, 2018. The sales tax will fund the transportation plan for 20 years.

Days before its effective date, the Goldwater Institute seeks to stop the collection of this voter-approved tax. The lawsuit wants to halt all necessary infrastructure improvements, based on unsubstantiated claims of voter confusion during the election and legally weak arguments regarding the constitutionality of Proposition 417. As indicated in the filing, these arguments not only should have been raised before the election, but also lack merit and undermine the voters’ voice when enacting Proposition 417.

“This lawsuit is nothing more than a post-election attack by those who failed to convince voters to oppose the transportation tax at the election,” said Board of Supervisors Chairman Todd House. “The voters spoke clearly about the need for improved transportation infrastructure in the Pinal region last November while also expressing their willingness to pay an additional sales tax that amounts to about \$7.33 per month per household.”

PRTA Board Member and Vice-Chairman of the Pinal County Board of Supervisors Pete Rios commented, “We cannot move forward with the transportation improvements until this lawsuit is over and will urge the court to dismiss the suit as quickly as possible.”

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