



THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF LAKE



2293 North Main Street
Crown Point, Indiana 46307

Office: (219) 755-3200
Home: (219) 322-4139
Fax: (219) 755-3064

GERRY J. SCHEUB, Second District

5-24-04

Your elected Lake County officials over the past 4 to 6 years have made a tremendous effort to control spending. Mandates by the State for additional judges and courts have put a tremendous amount of pressure on our budget. The State courts mandated a new jail in Lake County and a new county juvenile center for a combined cost of \$56,000,000.00. The three additional courts are the Superior, 2 Civil and one county Judicial. This along with the asbestos removal has cost us approximately \$14,000,000.00. That is a total of \$70,000,000.00 added to the counties expensive package. Along with these capitol costs is the manpower required to operate the Lake County jail, courts, and juvenile center. If it were not for these mandates, county government would actually have a lower cost to our taxpayers than 6 years ago. I feel we have done a very good job of cost control, but due to the mandated programs that have cost us some \$70,000,000.00 along with the asbestos removal it has put us in a tough property tax situation. These costs will be paid off in approximately 7 to 8 years and are currently being paid out of the casino monies.

We have initiated many cost saving programs over the past 6 years. Additional potential cost saving programs that I feel should be considered due to the current property tax crisis are as follows.

1. Vehicle:

The elimination of take home cars. This would decrease the cost of litigation due to accidents and the cost of gas and maintenance. Exempt from this restriction would be the Sheriff's police cars, the Drug Task Force, and the Lake County Highway Department. These departments along with elected officials are on twenty-four hour call seven days a week.