

-----Original Message-----

From:

Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 8:03 PM

To: citycouncil

Subject: Shuumi land tax

I see that the Shuumi land tax is on the city council's agenda. I just want to say that we are already heavily taxed in Albany, for the public schools. We hoped to make Albany our forever home in retirement when we bought here in 2013. We cannot afford to pay more tax. Please consider those that are on fixed incomes in Albany. Pensions are not keeping up with inflation, we can hardly afford to pay more.

Sincerely,

Parke Keeton

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**From:**

**Sent:** Thursday, April 28, 2022 5:48 PM

**To:** citycouncil

**Subject:** Fw: Shuumi land tax

Although the Shuumi tax is an honorable position, and may not add "much more" to the property tax bill, how much is too much can be debated. The fact is our personal Albany property tax bill has risen 23.26% in 8 years. It is now more than 14 thousand dollars a year, an unimaginable amount and even worse is that only 10 thousand may deducted on income tax returns.

How can this incremental creep of ever higher tax bills be stopped? It's unmanageable for average folks.

Parke Keeton

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**From:**

**Sent:** Sunday, May 1, 2022 8:13 PM

**To:** citycouncil

**Cc:**

**Subject:** Argument in opposition to the Shuumi Land Tax proposal

As documented in the background summary, it is clear that the Ohlone people, like all Indigenous people across the United States, have suffered devastating losses. Unfortunately they are not the only groups that have been persecuted in the history of our country, and sadly they will not be the last. The United States has a long history of committing egregious acts and enacting discriminatory policies that have harmed so many. Harm against Indigenous peoples, enslavement, internment camps, immigration policies that discriminate based on race and national origin, unjust drug sentencing, anti-LGBT policies, and so forth.

It should not be incumbent upon individual property owners, currently living within the city of Albany, to attempt to right the wrongs done to the Ohlone peoples. As noted in the background summary, "the process to become (a) 'recognized' (tribe) in the US is an arduous and expensive undertaking...that can last decades". We are talking about a very complex issue, equally or more complex than the issue of reparations for slavery. Why, then, are we being asked to do this as a City when we haven't done so for other equally offensive injustices? And, if this does proceed as a ballot initiative, then what issue is next on Albany's agenda? What will be the next request for property owners to redress that was never considered before? Is this Shuumi Tax in fact, a favored project that is being used to curry political favor or support?

Albany's voter-approved tax initiatives are many, and have resulted in a current effective property tax rate for Albany residents that is 1.7%, which is rapidly approaching twice the maximum rate of 1% that was approved under Prop 13. While some of the special tax assessments have allowances for low-income households, it is incorrect to say that only low-income households cannot afford more and more taxes. Middle-income households are being driven out of Albany by the accumulation of the special assessment taxes. Is Albany trying to create a community consisting of wealthy residents and the low-income households that they subsidize?

We pay very high special assessments for our schools, yet our household is childless. We pay a special assessment for sidewalk repair, yet the dangerous sidewalks on our street have not been replaced despite having contacted the Albany Public Works department twice, with photos, requesting their attention. And what about this proposed Shuumi tax? In the background summary we are told we should trust that these monies will be used wisely, while also acknowledging that Albany's contribution is "not an amount meant to pay for any particular service, but an attempt to represent the moral weight of Albany's existence". Although there is a lot of talk in the background summary about trust and about diversity and inclusiveness, does this not include the residents for whom this tax represents new hardships and burdens they can ill afford? And what about trust? Can middle-income residents trust that the City of Albany has their interests in mind?

It is unconscionable to request this Shuumi to be passed with a two-thirds voter approval, knowing well that there are many households in Albany, such as ours, that can ill-afford to pay more taxes. We have just come out of job losses, we are dealing with high inflation, and pensions and social security are not keeping pace with inflation. Please do not continually increase the burden on Albany's well-intentioned tax payers with measures based on emotional appeals. Make an effort to understand that average citizens are already sacrificing so much in order to survive in the most costly region of the country. Consider other options, such as a city-wide "Go Fund Me" effort, or an appeal to residents that are able to pay this tax, without further burdening those that are already dealing with limited resources. Or include a cap in the ballot proposal so that there may be limits to taxation through special assessments. Please take your words to heart and really consider the importance of maintaining a middle class in Albany.

Sincerely,  
Parke Keeton  
Albany Resident

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**From:**

**Sent:** Monday, May 2, 2022 8:23 AM

**To:** citycouncil

**Subject:** Item 10-2

Dear City Council,

I write briefly in support of moving forward with Item 10-2 directing staff to work with Sogorea Te' Land Trust to develop a budget proposal for payment of the Shuumi Land Tax. This would make a significant step toward bringing the City into right relationship with the original inhabitants of the land, who continue to live and work alongside us.

Many friends and colleagues from other parts of the Bay Area have already heard about Albany's efforts in this regard, and have remarked upon their surprise and excitement that Albany was taking leadership in this area. They expect many other cities will be following our lead. We should pay the Shuumi because it is the right thing to do. In considering the good of the city, however, it is also reasonable for Council to consider that these actions have brought credit on the city and helped to change the vision of Albany in the broader Bay Area and beyond. We owe gratitude to Member Gary for their leadership in moving the city beyond symbolic actions toward concrete enactments, and I urge Council to continue working forward in implementing this.

All the best

Greg Downs

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Gregory P. Downs, Ph.D. (he/him/his)

Professor, Department of History

University of California, Davis

<https://uncpress.org/book/9781469652733/the-second-american-revolution/>

<http://www.mappingoccupation.org/> (with Scott Nesbit)

<http://history.ucdavis.edu/people/gdowns>



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**From:**

**Sent:** Monday, May 2, 2022 1:44 PM

**To:** citycouncil

**Subject:** In support of the Shuumi Land Tax for the City of Albany / Ohlone territory

Hello,

I live at 1021 Ramona Ave on Ohlone land in Albany, and would like to express my full support of the Shuumi Land Tax. I already pay Shuumi tax on the home that we purchased here, and believe in land reparations.

Thank you for considering my perspective!

Hannah Levy

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Hannah Levy (she/her)

[hannaheve.com](http://hannaheve.com)

[twitter](#) + [instagram](#)

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**From:**

**Sent:** Monday, May 2, 2022 1:56 PM

**To:**

**Subject:** Tonight's agenda

To the Mayor and all the city council members,

While I continue to be grateful that we have people on the city council willing to serve the residents of the city, I am appalled at the very slow progress we are making as a community, particularly in areas where the groundwork has already been laid.

Where is the oomph, the energy and the leadership that we so desperately need to really show that, as a community, we need and want change. We cannot do it all at once but there are a couple of things that we have begun to work on, have had commissions for, who have made recommendations and which you seem intent on side stepping or altering in some way so as to negate the groundwork laid by community members who are in fact hoping to change what happens in our city and have done something about it, through all the proper channels.

In unfinished business, ITEM 10 , which occurs so late in the evening that it's a challenge for so many of us to be able to speak coherently, there are two critical items for which you have the power to really make some progress on and which you have dragged your feet. Both issues deserve to be dealt with promptly and now! That means you being decisive, acting for the community and making something happen. And not simply discussing, making verbal gymnastics of the intent or finally asking our city manager who is an employee of the city, to give you yet more recommendations or even make these critical choices.

**The Police Commission which you should pass.**

We need this and we need the city council to be the final arbiters not the police department itself. This is Albany; the Police should have nothing to hide and I, for one, am sad to know that there has been any opposition to this from them or any one else in the city. I realise it's politics but time for a change to a system that has not served so many of our community well. And surely we have the strength to be among the first communities to say "enough" and we need change!

**And the Shuumi Land Tax, which you should pass.**

The council must work with the Sogorea Te' Land Trust in order to right the historical wrongs that are part of our daily life on this land, and in Albany.

Our city is in an economic position to create a funding stream for Sogorea Te', for their tribal work to thrive and flourish, which is a way of reckoning with a history of exploitation.

Where's the hold-up here? Many of us pay shuumi Tax as individuals, time for the city to make a contribution, as repair for the brutality and damage of earlier generations, which is now our responsibility.

And further looking at the agenda for tonight I notice a list of seemingly perfunctory ( and rather meaningless since no action happens) proclamations and approvals namely:

Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, older Americans, Police Officers and Public Service workers. In a separate place we have Affordable Housing Month and Mental health Month I ask you.....What is the point of acknowledging all these very worthy groups of people if we dont put our money where our mouth is and actually do something real , like the two items above, which are clearly issues that demand action and attention now. Hopefully we can work on really Affordable housing or really improved rent control soon so that Albany indeed has affordable housing for people who work in the city, like our teachers.

Sincerely

Caroline Lehman

Member Albany Uprising

Chair, Interfaith Immigration Social Justice Team, Congregation Beth El.

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**From:**

**Sent:** Monday, May 2, 2022 4:33 PM

**To:** citycouncil

**Subject:** May 2nd Vote on Shuumi

To Albany City Council:

Thank you for hearing the voices of those of us who support Rematriation in Albany.

Speaking as founding executive director on behalf of Ethnic Arts Institute International (a 501(c) organization working in and around Albany), I encourage the city council to join us in paying Shuumi. We have embraced paying shuumi as an opportunity granted us by Sogorea Land Trust to demonstrate, in a real and tangible way, our acknowledgement of this place's history and to commit our support of the people who belong here.

On behalf of Ethnic Arts Institute International, I encourage you all to vote in favor of paying Shuumi and to take this opportunity to act as a model for those cities that will follow your example of ethical, committed and inclusive city governance.

Thank you,

Lisa Saunders Founding Executive Director

Ethnic Arts Institute International

**Sausalito's Premier Provider of Multicultural Arts & Entertainment**

Member of International Dance Council CID

Official Partner of UNESCO, United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization

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**From:**

**Sent:** Monday, May 2, 2022 4:56 PM

**To:** citycouncil

**Subject:** May 2 2022 Council meeting item 10-2

Dear Council members,

We're writing in support of the City paying an annual Shuumi Land Tax this year and in the future. We believe we are fortunate to have this opportunity to redress a small part of the immense harm that was done to and continues to affect the original inhabitants of the land that Albany occupies and that was seized through violent means.

This tax also provides a venue through which Albany can put action into the words of its land acknowledgement. Words without direct and meaningful action mean little.

Sincerely,

Julie Winkelstein and David Danby

-----Original Message-----

From:

Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 5:55 PM

To: citycouncil

Subject: Shuumi Land Tax

Hello Council Members,

I have lived in Albany for 20 years. I am also a business owner here in Albany. I have been paying my own shuumi land tax for several years (I don't remember when I started). I ask that the council will choose to have the City of Albany pay the shuumi land tax as well. If we can pay the US government, it is most appropriate to also pay the shuumi land tax.

Thank you all for your commitment to this city and this land.

Kindly,

Julia Jalalat

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:**

**Sent:** Monday, May 2, 2022 6:35 PM

**To:** citycouncil

**Subject:** May 2, 2022 City Council Meeting Concerns

Dear Albany City Council,

The citizens of Albany are looking to the City Council to make important and fair decisions and for you to take your Commissioners seriously by acting on their well thought out recommendations and thus showing you are taking the positions you were voted into by using intelligence and inspiration from your community.

SHUUMI land Tax needs passed by the Council tonight.

Having Sogorea Te' Land Trust as partners in the work you do on behalf of our City should be an honor. The City has a certain reputation among Bay Area cities now and I think you should work to allay those complaints. You need to pass the funding of Shuumi tax tonight. Folks are watching our embrace of the Ohlone. **DON'T** disappoint.

Albany is behind on resolutions for a civilian review board of the Albany Police. The police department should not review itself. In any other profession, employees are reviewed by their bosses, not their union or colleagues. You are on the crux of going backward or truly looking to the future of our community and being influential in the SF Bay Area by protecting the vulnerable. You, dear council need to establish a police commission in 2022.

The sugar-sweetened beverage tax needs to support the Universal Basic Income program that would help the humans in Albany whom you govern. Needs to pass!

Sometimes I feel that some of you are afraid to be bold and prevail on the right side of justice and concern for us. For the Council to consistently send serious matters back to Staff does

not seem like you have the best interests of your constituents at hand. Be honest. Let us be proud of you all.

Sincerely,

Jackie Hermes-Fletcher

Teacher, gardener

**From:**

**Sent:** Monday, May 2, 2022 7:41 PM

**To:** citycouncil

**Subject:** Item 10.2 comment

Dear Albany City Council members,

I write in support of item 10.2 on this evening's meeting agenda.

Paying a city wide Shumi tax is the right thing to do and will go a long way towards establishing a respectful working relationship with the local indigenous population.

Please vote to make the payment of Shumi an annual item in the city's budget.

Thanks,

Delia Carroll

Jackson St. Albany

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-----Original Message-----

From:

Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 9:22 PM

To: citycouncil

Subject: Support for Rematriation resolution and Shuumi Tax

Dear Mayor and City Council members,

I'm an Albany resident writing to support the Rematriation resolution and urge the Albany City Council to work with the Sogorea Te' Land Trust to right historical wrongs and support Indigenous land rights on the lands we occupy and inhabit.

Our city and home-owners are in an economic position to pay our share of Shuumi. This payment is a modest way for the residents of Albany to meaningfully acknowledge the Ohlone lands we occupy and create a funding stream for the Lisjan Ohlone and Sogorea Te' Land Trust.

I was so pleased when the repatriation resolution passed last Fall. I hope the council will make good on the resolution and commitment to rematriate land, incorporate inclusive curriculum revisions, make meaningful land acknowledgements and budget for and pay Shuumi taxes.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Payal Sampat