



Caddo Interfaith Coalition Expresses Concerns on Industrial Tax Exemption Programs

By CHUCK SMITH · FEB 7, 2018



INTERFAITH & TOGETHER LOUISIANA: Coalition members meet in Shreveport's Government Plaza Monday to express concerns over retroactive industrial tax-exemption program (ITEP) applications they say will cost Caddo Parish schools millions in revenues. CREDIT COURTESY: CHUCK SMITH / RED RIVER RADIO NEWS

GROUP QUESTIONS TAX EXEMPTIONS- A multi-faith coalition of clergy and lay persons along with people from Together Louisiana have expressed concerns over recent applications for Industrial Tax Exemptions from two companies in Caddo Parish... exemptions they feel would not only hurt Caddo Parish Schools...but are possibly unconstitutional. A press conference took place Monday before a meeting of the Caddo Commission's Economic Development Committee. Members of the coalition read from prepared statements citing that if the exemptions applied for by the companies: Calumet Lubricants and Waxes

and Inferno Manufacturing are approved it could wind up in a loss of \$5.8 million dollars in revenue for Caddo Parish. Coalition Member Susan Caldwell summarized their concerns. *"We want to make it clear we are not anti-business nor are we opposed to industrial tax exemptions"* explained Caldwell. *"We think they*

should be married to a model of economic development that says invest in us, invest in a skilled

workforce, invest in better roads and bridges. Invest in better pre-K, better investment in our K-12 education. We could have better sewerage and drainage, and cleaner air. Caldwell went on to offer information from legal counsel that had the opinion such retroactive tax exemption could be "unconstitutional". As to the outcome of Monday's meeting the Economic Development Committee voted 4-1 to recommend approval of Inferno's exemption application to the whole Commission for a vote on Thursday. Calumet's applications were found to be incomplete and were tabled. The Full Caddo Commission meets again this Thursday.



EXPRESSES CONCERNS - Susan Caldwell, member of the Interfaith Coalition summarizes group concerns at a press conference Monday over ITEP applications which may be unconstitutional. CREDIT COURTESY: CHUCK SMITH / RED RIVER RADIO NEWS

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