

**Argument For The Question**

**Argument for the Question: Henry J. Fitzgerald, 17 Hutchins Street; Honorary Co-Chair, Community Supporters for 2021**

A YES vote will protect the Shrewsbury we know and value. The proposed override, supported unanimously by the Selectmen, School Committee, and Finance Committee, offers a multi-year solution to meet service needs and expectations for all residents.

Without an override, we cannot sustain our core services. Our community is in jeopardy of not opening the new Beal School as planned, class sizes will increase, and our municipal departments will not maintain service levels. Our AAA bond rating will be at risk, potentially driving up our borrowing costs. One-time federal stimulus funds cannot solve this problem: such funds are restricted in use, and non-recurring.

The proposed \$9.5 million includes \$5.1 million for education, \$1 million for municipal departments, and \$3.1 million to establish an override stabilization fund. The remaining \$300,000 will reduce the use of Free Cash. The stabilization fund framework provides a sustainable plan for multi-year management of budgets.

Shrewsbury is a well-managed and fiscally responsible community that is simply unable to provide the expected level of services with current revenues. Even with a successful override, Shrewsbury will continue to offer the lowest tax rate of any neighboring community. Shrewsbury schools rank in the bottom 11% in spending per pupil of all districts statewide.

Our town's structural deficit leaves us two options: cut further into core services, or ask residents to help fund the community at the level needed to preserve what we value. The fiscally responsible decision is to invest in our community. Please join me in voting YES.

**Argument Against The Question**

Vote No on Question 1

No individual or group identified themselves as opposing the passage of this question. Therefore, in accordance with Chapter 427 of the Acts of 2006, Town Counsel has prepared the following statement:

Proposition 2 ½ limits the amount of revenue the Town may raise in local property taxes each year. It also limits the rate of increase in property taxes to no more than 2 ½ percent above the prior year.

The law provides for certain exceptions to the restraints imposed on local taxation; these exceptions are subject to local approval at an election. One exception concerns the authorization of debt for a capital project, or a "debt exclusion". Once a capital project is completed and paid for, the Town's authority to impose the additional tax assessments terminates.

The request for a Proposition 2 ½ override will provide a permanent increase in the Town's tax levy capacity. The proposal will "override" the levy limit imposed by Proposition 2 ½ and make available to the Town an additional \$9,500,000 in property taxes, beginning in FY 2022 and every year thereafter. The additional property taxes are for general operating funds.

Since proposition 2 ½ limits the amount of taxes a Town can raise annually, the voters must decide if these additional funds are needed.

**Board of Selectmen  
100 Maple Avenue  
Shrewsbury, Massachusetts 01545**

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CURRENT RESIDENT  
SHREWSBURY MA 01545-4006

**NOTICE OF BALLOT QUESTION  
Annual Town Election  
Tuesday, May 4, 2021**

**Questions concerning voting matters may be directed to the  
Office of the Town Clerk at 508-841-8507**

**Questions concerning the publication of this notice may be directed to the  
Office of the Board of Selectmen at 508-841-8504**

**Annual Town Election  
Tuesday, May 4, 2021  
Polls Open at 7:00 AM and Close at 8:00 PM**

# VOTER INFORMATION

## MAY 4, 2021 ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION

[WWW.SHREWSBURYMA.GOV/QUESTION1](http://WWW.SHREWSBURYMA.GOV/QUESTION1)

**Last day to apply for an Absentee or Early Vote** **Wednesday, April 28, 2021 –5 PM**

**Ballot BY MAIL before the Town Election:**

You can request an absentee or early ballot by mail by sending a request to: Town Clerk, 100 Maple Ave., Shrewsbury, MA 01545, dropping a request in the Town Bills & Correspondence Mailbox in front of Town Hall or sending an e-mail with your signature scanned-in to: [clerk@shrewsburyma.gov](mailto:clerk@shrewsburyma.gov)

**Last Day to apply IN PERSON for an Absentee** **Monday, May 3, 2021 – 12 PM**

**Ballot before the Town Election:**

Completed absentee or early ballots can be returned by mail, dropped in the Ballot Mailbox in front of Town Hall, or at the Town Clerk's office. Ballots must be received by the Town Clerk's Office by May 4.

### In-Person Early Voting

**Town Hall - 100 Maple Ave., Shrewsbury, MA 01545**

### In Person Early Voting prior to Town Election:

**Monday, April 26 - Thursday, April 29**

**Hours:**

**Monday April 26 from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM**

**Tuesday April 27 from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM**

**Wednesday April 28 from 8 AM to 4:30 PM**

**Thursday April 29 from Noon to 7:00 PM**

### Vote at your Polling Location on Election Day – Tuesday, May 4, 2021

**Hours from 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M.**

**Precinct 1 and 2:** Richard D. Carney Municipal Office Building - 100 Maple Avenue

**Precinct 3:** Calvin Coolidge School - 1 Florence Street

**Precinct 4:** Scandinavian Athletic Club - 438 Lake Street

**Precincts 5 and 10:** Sewer/Water Department Garage - 209 South Street

**Precinct 6:** Shrewsbury Senior Center - 98 Maple Avenue

**Precincts 7 and 8:** Spring Street School - 123 Spring Street

**Precinct 9:** Fire Station Number 3 - 20 Cen Tech Boulevard

*Don't know your precinct? Visit <http://www.shrewsburyma.gov/findmyprecinct>*

#### **Link to Vote by Mail Application**

<https://shrewsburyma.gov/votbymailapplication>

#### **Link to Sample Ballot**

<https://shrewsburyma.gov/sampleballotmay42021>

#### **Track Your Ballot**

<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/wheredoivotema/track/trackmyballot.aspx>

**Thank You and Stay Safe!**  
Sharyn M. Thomas, Town Clerk

Address: 100 Maple Ave., Shrewsbury, MA  
01545  
Phone: (508) 841-8507

## QUESTION 1

Shall the Town of Shrewsbury be allowed to assess an additional \$9,500,000 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purposes of funding municipal and school operating expenses for the fiscal year beginning July first, two thousand twenty one?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

### FAIR AND CONCISE SUMMARY OF THE QUESTION

**Summary:** In 1980, the voters of the Commonwealth adopted a referendum that became G.L. Chapter 59, Section 21C, but is more commonly known as "Proposition 2½".

Proposition 2½ limits the tax levy of the Town, which is the total amount that can be raised by taxation, to an increase of two and one half (2½%) percent of the previous year's levy limit plus new growth. Accordingly, the levy limit for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021 (FY 2022), will be established by increasing the levy limit of \$77,695,673 (FY 2021) by 2½% and then adding the tax levy value of any new growth in taxable property. New growth for FY 2022 is expected to be in the range of \$856,000. New growth in the current fiscal year (FY 2021) was \$856,963. Previous years' new growth was \$1,121,615 in FY 2020, \$1,597,448 in FY 2019 and \$1,299,856 in FY 2018.

The present question seeks a permanent increase in the tax levy limit of Nine Million Five Hundred Thousand (\$9,500,000) Dollars for the purposes of funding municipal and school operating expenses for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021.

Town Meeting ultimately determines the total amount of appropriations (within the levy limit) and the appropriation is then met or raised by application of the local property tax rate upon assessed property values. If the full amount of the proposed increase of Nine Million Five Hundred Thousand (\$9,500,000.00) Dollars is used and appropriated by the Town Meeting for the first year (fiscal year 2022, from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022), the impact on the average single family home which is valued at \$481,819 will be an annual increase of \$704.34. If the Town Meeting does not appropriate all of the increased levy capacity, the impact will be lower, depending on the actual amount appropriated.

A "YES" vote will make available to the Town Meeting an additional Nine Million Five Hundred Thousand (\$9,500,000) Dollars in tax levy capacity beyond the current limitation established by Proposition 2½ (G.L. c. 59, s. 21C); and

A "NO" vote will not make additional levy capacity available to the Town Meeting.

### ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST THE QUESTION AS REQUIRED TO BE PROVIDED TO YOU UNDER CHAPTER 427 OF THE ACTS OF 2006

These arguments have been prepared solely by the ballot question committees for each side. These committees were organized specifically to influence the outcome of the vote on the question and are printed as submitted.