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Get new development to pay way on schools

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I recently attended a Beaufort County School District meeting regarding the upcoming \$162.7 million bond

referendum.

I was deeply impressed by the excellent fact-finding, planning, design, needs analysis and future flexibility exhibited by all the personnel involved. Although nobody wanted to talk about the referendum's added tax cost for businesses and non-resident property owners -- 50 percent more than what resident owners will pay -- I'll probably vote for it anyway.

However, as I told Superintendent Valerie Truesdale, this will absolutely be the last school referendum I ever vote for unless she and school board members prove they are doing everything possible to have school impact fee authorization passed by the state legislature.

We know what the real problem is -- rampant, reckless and destructive development that's sucking the life out of Beaufort County -- and I refuse to subsidize it by continuing to vote for tax increases. Schools are the largest item in property tax bills, and it's crazy not to impose development-generated school costs on those who are causing them -- developers and their buyers.

After all, impact fees, like expensive wind and hail insurance, are simply part of the cost of Lowcountry living. If newcomers have problems paying impact fees, they can back off on the granite countertops, stainless steel appliances, etc., so sought after in new homes. The real "unfairness" is not forcing these folks to pay their way.

So Superintendent Truesdale, when do we leave to lobby in Columbia? Time grows short.

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Henry V. Sanders

Hilton Head Island

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