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Wakulla County Residents Challenge County Impact Fees

Some folks in Wakulla County are challenging the mandatory impact fees needed for both residential and commercial properties in the county.

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Some folks in Wakulla County are challenging the mandatory impact fees needed for both residential and commercial properties in the county.

Lucy Ward, who lives in Wakulla County and is against the impact fees says, "I think these impact fees is what's stopping a lot of families from coming down here and building houses and building small businesses."

Ward is like many Wakulla County residents who say the impact fees in the county are not needed. Ward owns a daycare center in Crawfordville. And the amount she is having to pay to move from one center to another is over \$25,000 in impact fees.

Ward says, "The impact fee is absolutely not necessary. We pay enough taxes in this county through our buildings and through our houses."

The impact fees in the county are assessed to all residential and property holders. They're designed to help with county infrastructure and upkeep.

Commissioner Jerry Moore who is against the impact fees says they severely hurt small businesses and they should be done away with.

Moore says, "We need small businesses, we need small shopping centers, to create the jobs.. It's just as simple as that. An impact fee in today's world is an anti-job bill."

Commissioner Moore says places like Wal-Mart can afford to pay the impact fees. In fact, documents obtained from the Wakulla County Building Department shows that Wal-Mart payed over \$129,000 in impact fees.

Hugh Taylor who is for the impact fees says, "If we had had impact fees during the real estate boom,

Wakulla County would have all the infrastructure it needs, all the roads it needs and full unemployment."

Commissioner Alan Brock is proposing that the county start by getting rid of the road impact fee until 2012. That fee is about 50% of the the total impact fee for property owners in the county.

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