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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Melbourne Regional Chamber Urges Community Support for Brevard Public Schools Sales Surtax Extension

Melbourne, FL [August 27, 2020] The Melbourne Regional Chamber (MRC) Board of Directors recently voted to formally endorse the extension of the half-cent sales surtax for Brevard Public Schools (BPS).

“One item on this November’s ballot with the greatest importance to voters in our community is the extension of the half-cent sales surtax for BPS,” said Michael Ayers, President & CEO of the MRC. “High quality schools help attract businesses and residents to the Space Coast and encourage those already here to stay, and there is a tremendous need to update our school infrastructure.”

In 2014, Brevard County voters overwhelmingly approved the sales surtax for a six-year period, which will expire at the end of this year. Although nearly \$200 million in funding from the surtax has been invested in construction projects at local schools, there still is a funding backlog equating to millions of dollars in identified capital improvement projects. If residents vote yes to reauthorize this vital funding source, the half-cent sales surtax will continue to fund an estimated \$270 million dollars of critical improvements such as facility renewal, educational technology, and security with all expenditures monitored by an independent citizen oversight committee.

The Melbourne Regional Chamber is proud to support this effort and encourages other community organizations to join the campaign to improve our schools. Every dollar raised stays right here in Brevard County and benefits our schools and students as funds are spent on a preapproved, publicly vetted list of projects.

“The condition of local school facilities has a direct relationship to the quality of education and, therefore, we are urging Brevard County’s residents and businesses to support the extension of the sales surtax to help fund essential BPS repairs and upgrades,” commented Todd J. Pokrywa, President of The Viera Company and Chair of the Board for the MRC. Natasha Spencer, Senior Vice President of Shelter Mortgage and

Chair of the MRC's Business Advocacy Committee added, "An investment in our schools is an investment in our economic growth and the future of our community."

The MRC continues to coordinate with Brevard Citizens for Better Schools, a registered political action committee, and other supporters of the referendum to help the measure pass this November. For more information about the initiative, contact: brevardbetterschools@gmail.com.

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The Melbourne Regional Chamber is a five-star accredited chamber from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber proudly serves the business communities of Brevard County and East Central Florida. For more information, visit www.melbourneregionalchamber.com.