



County of San Bernardino



Ensen Mason CPA, CFA • Auditor-Controller/Treasurer/Tax Collector

NEWS RELEASE – For Immediate Release

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MASON HIGHLIGHTS EXPANSION OF TAX RELIEF PROGRAM

San Bernardino, CA — San Bernardino County Auditor-Controller/Treasurer/Tax Collector (ATC) Ensen Mason today thanked Governor Gavin Newsom for signing AB 133 last weekend. This measure will expand eligibility beginning July 1, 2020, for the Property Tax Postponement (PTP) Program, thus benefitting eligible San Bernardino County seniors, the blind, and disabled persons.

The PTP Program allows vulnerable, low income taxpayers to stay in their homes by financing taxes at a low rate of interest. The tax bill is eventually paid when the taxpayer is in a better financial situation or when the property is sold.

The bill increases the household income limit for eligibility from \$35,000 annually to \$45,000, and lowers the program interest rate from 7% to 5%. “This common sense legislation reduces the interest rate to reflect modern day realities of the real estate market, and accounts for inflation by increasing the amount of money an applicant can earn annually and still qualify for the program,” noted Mason. “This is a rare example of a government program that financially assists taxpayers without additional cost to the taxpaying public. I actively supported AB 133 and sent the Governor a letter urging his signature. Low-income seniors, the blind, and disabled persons deserve help from their government in meeting their property tax obligations. I will do everything within my power to help them continue to live in their own homes.”

Mason was elected last year as a Taxpayer Advocate/CPA stressing greater accountability to taxpayers and improved transparency with county government in general and the ATC in specific. Under his leadership, ATC published its first ever Annual Report on Fraud, Waste and Abuse; greatly expanded the ATC presence on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram; published a quarterly newsletter on happenings within the Department; and created a Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping collaboration application based presentation entitled “Where Do My Property Tax Dollars Go?” that provided taxpayers with detailed information on every portion of their property tax payment and where it is spent.

The San Bernardino County ATC Office was honored with three Achievement Awards this year by the National Association of Counties (NACo) for its Cashiering System, Remittance System, and Property Tax Refund Enhancement Project. ATC Mason is already working on complying with AB 133 within his Department on its first day of effectiveness, July 1, 2020.

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