

Hello, this is Tom Cookman with a Community Comment.

Cal Fire doesn't have enough money to operate so they sat down with some elected officials and devised a way to squeeze more money out of homeowners. The backroom deal they came up with, and got Governor Brown to sign, was to TAX every homeowner \$150 per home on their property for fire protection. But, what if you were already covered by another agency? Well, they decided that if you were in the city limits, the highest concentration of voters, you didn't have to pay anything. If you lived on the outskirts of town and were covered by an agency like Humboldt Fire District, the next concentration of voters, you only have to pay \$115 per home. And for some crazy reason, some of those property owners were exempt. In McKinleyville, if you live on one side of the street, you were hit with a \$115 bill. Across the street, your neighbor pays nothing. Also, this tax is retroactive. It covers a period from July first 2011 to June thirtieth 2012. We will get hit with another round of this tax in January. Let me get this straight, I'm suppose to pay taxes for something I didn't approve, for something I already have, for a year that has already passed. It is illegal for our elected officials to pass a new tax without two-thirds of the legislators voting for it. They didn't have the legislative support for this new tax, so they masqueraded it as a FEE. I pay over \$9,000 per year in property taxes. This equates to \$786 per month I pay for property my family purchased in the 1800's for \$400. Included in this property tax bill is a \$36 and a \$72 assessment for the Humboldt Fire District. I have two parcels, so I'm already paying an extra \$216 for fire protection. When I called Cal Fire, I asked them what I'm getting for this fee. I was told that their agency would aid in protecting my home from a fire, if they were in the area. Isn't that why I pay to fund Humboldt Fire District? If my home

catches fire, Humboldt Fire will come out and fight the fire, if it is destroyed, I have insurance. I am already protected. The bottom line is that I already pay too much in taxes and I want that tax money to first go to education, police and fire protection. I would then spend the rest of the money on all the other programs we have. We are short funds, yet nearly fifty cents of every dollar spent by Humboldt County government is spent on social programs like welfare. Why didn't our legislators come up with a \$150 per house welfare fee? If we are short on funds, how about spending some energy on separating the poor from the lazy. Personally, I want to help the poor. We give all this money away to keep these people fed and yet when their kids go to school, I now have to pay to feed them breakfast, lunch and sometimes dinner too. Where is the money going that we already gave these families? I have a friend who owns a grocery store and it is nauseating to see what these people spend their food stamp money on. They buy potato chips, twinkies, soda and every kind of processed food you can imagine. Then they whip out the cash and buy beer, cigarettes and lottery tickets. Our government has the same mentality, they spend money on themselves in higher wages and benefits and then when it comes to police and fire protection, they don't have enough money, so they figure out a way to squeeze more money out of the taxpayers. ENOUGH IS ENOUGH. Cal Fire needs to be fully funded with the taxes I already pay. If you want to get more money out of us, put it on the ballot as a higher compensation for government workers bond or a bond to pay for government workers to retire in their fifties or a welfare government assistance bond or a bond to print everything in spanish, because that is where the majority of my taxes are spent now.

This has been Tom Cookman with a Community Comment