

Hello, this is Tom Cookman with a Community Comment.

Today is Election Day. It is a day that each and everyone of us should exercise our constitutional right to vote. As a Conservative, for the most part, it is a very frustrating day. It seems that only about 25% of the candidates I vote for win the election, so I'm usually frustrated when I watch the results come in. Even though I'm frustrated, I really enjoy this time of year. Locally, we have turned a corner the last couple years in regards to attracting new businesses to our area. We now have a Building and Planning department that actually works with developers, instead of fighting with them every step of the way. We are very fortunate that Kirk Girard is no longer in control of the Planning and Building Departments. It seems that he was instrumental in slowing down the permit process. I always considered him a key person in the Anti-Development crowd. With a new direction in the permitting process, Humboldt County is moving forward with new construction. The key to ending any recession is to put a hammer in a contractor's hand. We started moving in a positive economic direction when we elected Virginia Bass, Rex Bohn and Ryan Sundberg to the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors. With a pro growth Board, Humboldt County can attract new businesses to our community. Today is a very important day if you want this to continue. We need to re-elect Virginia Bass and Ryan Sundberg; they are key components in Humboldt County's continued progress at being a diversified economic community. Under the leadership of politicians like Chris Kerrigan, Humboldt County devolved from a vibrant resource based business environment with timber and fishing as our base, into a county that has marijuana as the number one industry, closely followed by government jobs. There isn't any tax base when government jobs

and illegal drug activity are your top employers. Private sector jobs are what creates the taxes that provide the economic foundation of any successful city, county or state. Humboldt County is finally on the right path to building this foundation. Keep this in mind when you cast your ballot today. Virginia Bass and Ryan Sundberg are moving our county forward in the right economic direction and they really deserve another term. The District Attorney's office has to make choices on where to spend their resources. The head of this department has to make decisions on what crimes to prosecute, which ones to plea bargain and which criminals get to walk. Unfortunately, we have had a DA who thinks that marijuana is not a crime worth pursuing. I actually understand the medicinal aspects of the drug and the people who smoke it recreationally are, for the most part, harmless. When it comes to drunk drivers and stoned drivers, I don't want either one on the road, but the stoned driver doesn't cause near the damage as a drunk drivers causes. The problem we face in Humboldt County is that we have invited the criminal element of the marijuana industry into our neighborhoods. The guy who has a 215 card isn't our problem. It is the people who pool their 215 cards together and create huge commercial grow operations that generate millions of dollars. This has attracted drug cartels and gangs to Humboldt County with little fear of ever being prosecuted. This influx of undesirables is the number one reason we have experienced extreme increases in every reportable crime in Humboldt County. We have the opportunity to change this culture by electing a District Attorney who wants to make Humboldt County a safe place to live and raise your family. I believe the candidate who best represents this is Maggie Fleming. Please take the time to vote today.

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