

Hello, this is Tom Cookman with a Community Comment.

I am adamantly opposed to Measure Z. If this Measure passes, it will increase the sales tax in Humboldt County. There are other sales tax proposals on the ballot for individual cities as well. Every tax increase in Humboldt County will hurt future business investment and tourism. The problem with giving our government more money, is that it will never be enough. The system is severely broken and broke. It is like a raging wildfire and all that is burning is dollar bills, and for some reason our politicians and government officials think that adding more of our tax dollars as fuel to the fire is the solution. I was fortunate enough to meet with the County Administrative Officer and Supervisor Rex Bohn for a question and answer session on the budget and the budgetary process. I want to thank both of them for their time and I do understand that their hands are tied by the Bureaucrats in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. With my new budgetary knowledge, I'm still opposed to Measure Z. I recently came across a website that every single taxpayer in Humboldt County needs to view. I encourage everyone to turn on their computers, laptops and smart phones and go to transparenciacalifornia.com and click on salaries and then go to Humboldt County. This website lists every County Employee's regular pay, overtime and their benefits package. The information on this website will turn your stomach. There are 384 employees who are making over \$100,000 per year of your tax dollars, 4 are making over \$300,000, 22 are making over \$200,000 and 81 are making over \$150,000. How does that compare with what you are making? These are tax supported jobs and I for one want to scream from the rooftops that our taxes cannot support these extremely high salaries anymore. If these 384 employees were given just a \$10,000 per year pay cut our budget would not only be balanced, we would have over a million dollar surplus. In the next three months you will hear the proponents of Measure Z tell you how they will have to cut police and fire protection if they don't receive this increase in tax revenue. The Second Amendment to the Constitution is very simple; it is the right of the people to keep and bear arms. If we can't afford to dispatch the police in a

timely manner to your home in an emergency, I highly recommend that you exercise your Constitutional right to own a gun and use it to protect you and your family. In the middle of the night, the sound of a shotgun cocking will send the most hardened criminal on the run. Since the police couldn't be dispatched to your home because there are too many bloated salaries, maybe the 911 operator can send an ambulance or the coroner instead. Harsh? No, it is what we need to do to protect our families. Giving the government more of our hard earned dollars is not the answer. They will never be satisfied. The government is hemorrhaging tax dollars and the exorbitant salaries and absurd waste is where we need to apply the pressure to stop the bleeding. We already pay State and Federal Income Tax, Property Tax, Sales Tax, Gasoline Tax, Utility Taxes and the tax list goes on and on and the government still can't balance a budget. Before you vote on Measure Z, remember there are 384 Humboldt County employees making over \$100,000 per year. Each and every one of those dollars came from a tax that you already paid. Enough is enough, vote NO on Measure Z.

This has been Tom Cookman with a Community Comment