

Hello, this is Tom Cookman with a Community Comment

I have been very vocal with my opinion of the government; especially in regards to how the system has evolved into this entity that cannot sustain itself. We have hundreds of local employees who are making over \$100,000 per year. I have had several phone calls from these individuals who are upset that I am verbalizing these facts. They are incorrectly thinking that I'm attacking them personally. If an employer wants to overpay an employee, it isn't the employee's fault. I do not have a problem with the person who is making these high salaries. I have a problem with the system that somehow allows certain public employees to make a million dollars every four years when we can't afford it. This is absurd, ridiculous and most importantly, it is unsustainable. The part of this equation that angers me the most is that our Board of Supervisors, the very individuals we have entrusted with taking care of our tax dollars, have become advocates for the government employees instead of being advocates for the taxpayers. If you are one of these highly compensated employees, you know that you are being overpaid. Your co-workers know that you are being overpaid. It is impossible to continue paying you these high salaries. The day is coming when Humboldt County will be forced to file bankruptcy. Blackmailing the taxpayer with fear of losing police and fire protection to get more tax revenue is like putting a bandaid on a wound that needs a tourniquet. The tax bandaid is only a temporary solution. Over fifty cents of every dollar that Humboldt County spends is in the Welfare Department, yet when they ask us to pay more taxes, it is always for the schools, police and fire protection. I just paid the second half of my property tax bills, and there are several fire and school fees attached to the bill. This tax and spend mentality has to stop. The taxpayer is overwhelmed with the amount of taxes

we are forced to pay. Every year we pay more, the government spends more, and the system is getting worse and worse. We are spending more money on our police protection. How is that turning out for us? Crime is skyrocketing. The number of people getting robbed in Humboldt County is out of control. Our jail is so overcrowded that when a thief is caught, they are released. This catch and release policy is creating a new breed of criminal who isn't afraid of the consequences of their actions. An overcrowded jail isn't a reason to release these criminals back out into the the streets to further prey on the public. Keep my taxes and use them to build more facilities and make these criminals serve time for their offenses, instead of using this money to overpay already highly compensated public employees. If a cell can hold two prisoners, put three of them in there, regardless of what the ACLU thinks. They might consider the accommodations overcrowded and uncomfortable. Great, maybe the criminal will think twice before they break into our homes again. Instead of making sure the criminal has the proper medical care, three meals a day, cable TV and an exercise room, let's first make sure that the law abiding tax paying citizen feels safe in their own homes. There are a pack of thieves roaming our streets willing to steal anything to get their next meth fix. They do not fear the authorities because they will simply be cited and released. When they are released, they will be breaking into your house in a matter of hours. Please use the Measure Z money to lock these criminals up instead of giving county employees another raise.

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