

Hello, this is Tom Cookman with a Community Comment

I have been very vocal in my analysis of how Humboldt County resources are being spent. The three hundred million dollar budget that allocates over fifty percent of these resources to Social Services is absurd, at best. We have 384 employees collecting over one hundred thousand dollars per year. Unfortunately, we can't afford these high salaries, so instead of cutting wages at the top, our Board of Supervisors were successful at getting another tax passed to increase revenue. In my opposition to the new taxes, I have had several county employees take issue with my comments. I want to be perfectly clear, I do not have any problem with highly compensated employees, my focus is on a system that has evolved into the mess we find ourselves in today. If the owner of a fast food restaurant wants to pay a teenager \$50 per hour to flip burgers, it's not the kids fault when the owner has to raise the price of a hamburger to \$25 each. The customers are the ones who have to pay the high price for a hamburger. In a free market society, the customers will go to another restaurant and the \$25 per burger place will close their doors. Unfortunately, the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors are the proprietors of a facility that is paying the burger flipper \$50 per hour and we are the customers who are being forced to pay \$25 per burger. The sad part is that we don't have any other restaurants to go to and we are forced to eat our meals at the \$25 per burger facility, that is if we have a job. If you don't have a job, your burgers are free. That is our system in a nutshell. If you are one of the employees making the high wages, it is only a matter of time when this house of cards will come tumbling down. In 2013, the Sheriff's Department had 69 employees whose salary and benefit package exceeded the \$100,000 per year mark. If you are one of these 69 employees, I am

happy for you. I do not have any issues with what you are being paid. The system, yes. The employee, no. I do however have issues with what we are receiving for our high taxes. I have lived in Humboldt County my entire life. I have raised my family, invested in our local economy and have never taken one single penny in unemployment, workers compensation, disability, welfare or any government assistance whatsoever. I have always been employed and paid my fair share of taxes. I have been very fortunate and consider myself blessed to be in that position. On March 28th my home was burglarized. Fortunately for us, the thieves were interrupted and didn't get nearly as much as they could have. It took four hours for someone from the Sheriff's Department to come to my home after 911 was called. Even though we know who robbed us, as of today they haven't even been contacted. There were tools left at the scene and a meth pipe. The crooks checked every window and door before they gained access to our home. No fingerprint analysis was conducted. I received an email from the Humboldt County Sheriff's Department stating that unless the suspects, who hadn't been contacted after more than a month, implicated themselves in the crime, the case was closed. As a taxpayer, I'm forced to eat at the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors Restaurant where the Waitress, Cook and Dishwasher make \$50 per hour. The sad part is that the service sucks, the dishes are dirty and the \$25 hamburger taste like crap. This has been Tom Cookman with a Community Comment