

Hello, this is Tom Cookman with a Community Comment

I strongly opposed Measure Z and Measure Q in the last election. Both of these 1/2 percent sales tax initiatives were passed with ease. Measure Z, which is a new sales tax for all of Humboldt County, passed with nearly 56% of the vote, while Measure Q, which extended the already implemented sales tax for the City of Eureka, passed with almost 67% of the vote. Both of these measures were strongly supported by our elected government employees as well as our non-elected government employees. The advertisements were essentially the same for both of these tax increases. We were told we needed this money to protect our citizens and that without it, services would be cut, 9-1-1 response times would be so slow that lives would be in danger, fire protection would be hindered because of a lack of funds. These scare tactics worked. The voters spoke loud and clear. I opposed these measures, not because I didn't want the very things the proponents were advertising this money would give us, but because I strongly felt, and still do, that there is plenty of money in our budget and it is simply being mismanaged and spent negligently. Humboldt County spends over \$400,000 every single day, 365 days a year, on Social Services. This is over half of our budget, yet we didn't hear one single word about this during the campaign. We have a serious homeless problem, a problem that isn't getting better by throwing money at it. If spending money on the poor solved the problem, we wouldn't have the extreme number of homeless people wandering our streets. With that said, here we are watching what our employees are doing with the budgets. Last week we were told that the Fire Station on Myrtle Avenue is going to be closed and the Fire Station on Ocean Avenue will be unmanned on certain days. There were several Public Safety Officers in the City of

Eureka who lost their jobs. I don't know about you, but this makes me furious. We are lied to and lied to and lied to by these officials so they can get their greedy little hands on more and more of our money. They use scare tactics to get the citizens to vote for these tax increases. There isn't any accountability for these government employees. In the past, we would elect City Councilmen and County Supervisors who would oversee this process and make sure the employees acted in the best interests of the citizens. These elected officials were like the old farmer who would stand guard over his chicken house with a shotgun, making sure the fox didn't sneak in and kill some of his chickens. This old farmer really cared about his chickens. Somewhere along the line the old farmer died and a fox dressed up like the old farmer was elected and the fox is now in charge of the chicken house. The farmer was paid a little over \$30,000 per year, but once the fox got elected the salary steadily increased over the years to where today, the salary and benefit package for our County Supervisors exceeds \$100,000 per year. Instead of being an advocate for the general population, they are simply advocates for big government. A government who is supposed to work for the taxpayer, but somehow they have completely forgotten who actually pays their wages. The very services the voters were scared of losing are the services that are being cut. We've been lied to and scammed by our elected officials. There isn't a single one of them who deserves to keep their job.

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