

Hello, this is Tom Cookman with a Community Comment.

We all know what it means when someone says the fox is guarding the henhouse. In Humboldt County the politicians and Administrators are the foxes who are guarding our fiscal henhouse. Our tax dollars are the eggs that are being gathered by these individuals. They never have enough eggs to feed the ever expanding budget. We are always left with a deficit in the departments we hold near and dear to our hearts. We want our schools, law enforcement, fire protection and our roads to be fully funded. When there is a shortfall, as there always is, the politicians come to the taxpayers with a message of fear. Without increasing revenues, I mean taxes, we will see the departments we deem essential underfunded and unable to meet our needs when a crisis arises. Without more money our children will be left behind academically, our streets will be unsafe and if your home catches on fire you will lose everything. With this message we open up our wallets and give them more and more and more of our hard earned dollars. What do we get for increasing the amount of revenue? Are our streets safer? Are the schools fully funded? Does the fire department have enough equipment? Are our roads smooth and free of the potholes that when hit make us wonder if our vehicle will need an alignment? These are questions we all need to ask ourselves. At the March 8th Humboldt County Board of Supervisors meeting our Supervisors voted themselves a 7% pay raise. With benefits they were already making well over \$100,000 per year and somehow this isn't enough. I find this very offensive to those of us who are paying for these outlandish salaries and had to hear how tight the budget was when these same politicians were lobbying for higher taxes with the Measure Z sales tax increase. Now that they have the increased revenue, they voted themselves a pay

raise. The first question I have for everyone is how many of you are earning over \$100,000? How many of you think that it is a good idea for our Board of Supervisors to have the authority to give themselves a raise? I think it is a conflict of interest for the Supervisors to be in charge of their own pay and at the same time asking us for more tax dollars. Technically they work for us and yet they get to set their own salaries. Humboldt County Supervisors are already some of the higher paid Supervisors in the state. They are especially near the top when it comes to pay for the population size of their county. The streets are deteriorating, the homeless problem is out of control, there are people begging for money at every busy intersection, the homeless camp is dumping raw sewage into our bay at an alarming rate, businesses are struggling to survive with all the government regulations that are dumped on them, our once vibrant timber economy is dwindled down to a pittance, our trees are growing to fuel forest fires, not to build homes, the marijuana industry and the government are our top employers, with nearly 400 county employees making over \$100,000 per year, and our Welfare Department is spending over \$400,000 per day and the number of people in poverty in Humboldt County is steadily rising. With all these horrendous problems, those in charge think they are doing such an outstanding job that they gave themselves a 7% pay raise. This is nothing short of disgusting. The foxes are guarding the henhouse.

This has been Tom Cookman with a Community Comment