

Hello, this is Tom Cookman with a Community Comment.

I don't care if you are a Democrat or Republican, conservative or liberal, Christian or atheist, heterosexual or homosexual, redneck or environmentalist, black, white or brown, or which bathroom you think you need to go in, every single one of us needs to answer this question: Is the government too big, too small or the right size? 100% of the people I've asked think the government is way too big. This is the problem with budgets. We have too many government employees and they are, for the most part, overpaid. The majority of the budget goes directly to employee compensation. We will have several tax increase proposals on the November ballot and each of these tax increases will have some essential public safety factor behind them. It appears that we will have a twenty year ½ cent sales tax proposal on the ballot for maintaining county roads. This tax increase would generate ten million dollars a year in revenue. That is a TWO HUNDRED MILLION DOLLAR TAX INCREASE. That is two hundred million fewer dollars spent in restaurants, car lots, movie theaters and in grocery stores. We already live in one of the highest taxed communities in the country. Please remember that we have department heads making over \$250,000, of our tax dollars, a year. There were 386 Humboldt County employees making over \$100,000 per year in 2014 and that number has only risen. Our Board of Supervisors recently gave themselves a 7% pay raise and justified it by telling us they voted down previous raises. The Supervisors position has evolved from a public service commitment, with a reasonable salary, where the elected official held an outside job in most cases, to a job that gets over \$100,000 per year in compensation. That is over \$100,000 of our tax dollars. This new sales tax Measure, which I will call Measure Screw, will create more \$100,000 per year jobs. The

roads do need help. I propose that we privatize the work. Let the Humboldt County employees who actually get the work done and don't stand around the job site go to work for the private companies who would bid on the jobs. We can't afford to keep paying these outrageous wages for mediocre work. Yes, a lot of the work is mediocre. I cringe when I see a county employee throwing asphalt into a pothole on a rainy day only to have a car run over the mix to pack it down. Many times the hole just gets blown out because there was too much water in the hole. Then we run over the mix and it gets thrown up on our vehicle leaving tar on our paint. The size of our government is out-of-control in two major areas, we have too many employees and they are paid too much money. It sickens me to hear the younger generation talk about how they just want to get a government job. The private sector is now a second class place to work in the next generation's eyes. Well, I say enough is enough. I called all five of our Supervisors to express my opinion that we don't need this new ½ cent sales tax measure on the ballot and Virginia Bass was the only one to call me back. We need to put a measure on the ballot that reduces government employee compensation. I hope someone listening knows how this can be legally put on the ballot. I will help anyway I can. We need to combat this two hundred million dollar tax increase proposal, Measure Screw, with a measure that is of the people, for the people and by the people.

This has been Tom Cookman with a Community Comment.