

Hello, this is Tom Cookman with a Community Comment.

Today the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors will be considering putting a half percent sales tax increase on the November 8th ballot to fund county roads and transportation services. It is just a formality that they have this on their agenda with the ruse that it is just a consideration. What are the odds of them shelving this idea? I think it is 1,000 to 1. They will put this tax increase proposal on the November ballot, guaranteed. The proposal would sunset in twenty years. The problem with these sunsets is that before the designated time period ends, they put it back on the ballot seeking an extension from the tax payers. This happened recently with Measure Q and the voters passed the extension. Every time we ignorantly give the politicians more money, they take that as an endorsement from the citizens that they are doing a good job, when in fact they are doing just the opposite. These ballot initiatives asking for more taxes were a rarity just a few years ago and now they are part of every election. The more money government receives, the more they spend. The campaign to scare you into approving this new sales tax measure, which I've named Measure Screw, will center on funds that the county no longer receives from Sacramento. The bureaucrats in Sacramento are withholding these funds to finance their own incompetent budgetary practices. The whole lot of them should lose their jobs, yet we just keep reelecting them. Every person in California should vote against the incumbent regardless of party affiliation. With the money stream being cut to Humboldt County, our local politicians are scrambling to make ends meet. I understand this is a difficult spot they are in, but asking us to open our wallets even more isn't the answer. Instead of working so hard to get more money out of the existing tax base, the Supervisors should be doing

everything they can to expand the tax base. We need more tax payers in the system, not more taxes from the tax payers already in the system. Unfortunately this revenue shortfall is compounded when decisions are made to acquire property for the good of society. The acquisition of the 1,000 acre McKay Community Forest near Redwood Acres is a classic example. On the surface, it is a great idea to have land available for everyone to use. This land is now off the tax rolls. The property tax revenue from this land has ceased. The private sector timber jobs created by 1,000 acres of prime forestland is now replaced with government jobs needed to manage this property. It is a double hit to the budget. This is happening all over Humboldt County. A majority of the land surrounding our bay has been acquired by the government over the last decade or so. The north bay ranches are Fish and Game property now. Property taxes and cattle revenue which were an income stream into our government budgets have been replaced with expenses. We need to reverse this trend of property being taken out of the private sector and utilize our time attracting businesses to Humboldt County instead. Make it easier for businesses to get building permits. If you put a hammer in a contractor's hand, everything that goes with that from an economic standpoint improves. The property then generates more property and sales tax revenue and private sector jobs are created. Bottom line, quit acquiring property, streamline the permit process, reduce compensation to those county workers making over \$75,000 per year and put our road work out to bid to private contractors who can do the work more efficiently for less money.

This has been Tom Cookman with a Community Comment.