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Taxed Into Awareness

Every year county appraisal districts mail notices of appraised value increases to hundreds of thousands of property owners across the State which prompts protests by unhappy taxpayers. Nearly 100,000 notices were mailed in Galveston County last week and my phones lit up! The people are not happy!

Me neither. My value increased more than \$100,000! Over time, that will result in a \$3,000 tax spread out over the next four years.

If you are unable to attend one of my protest classes (May 5-6 pm, 174 Calder Drive, League City and May 23, 10 am, AMOCO FCU, 235 FM 528, Friendswood), go online to www.galcotax.com, click on the Press Releases & Important Information button and download the protest booklet and spreadsheet.

In a nutshell, insure your property is listed correctly in the CAD records. Go to its website. Validate that the square footage is correct, that the improvements are listed properly and that the condition is appropriate (this is the Adjustment % on the GCAD website)? Locate your neighborhood on the GIS map page. These are the properties you are being compared to. Where does your property fall when compared to others in your neighborhood?

Use the spreadsheet to perform an analysis. Then, either schedule an informal conference with an appraiser or mail in the formal protest form NO LATER THAN JUNE 1. The CAD is not your enemy; they have a job to do. Help them help you! Take documentation, photos, repair estimates. What would you have to do to your property to sell it? Do the kitchen and bath require updating?

Over the long term - I want the current property tax system reformed. I continue to carry that message to Austin. Despite many new conservatives elected to the Texas Senate and House, reform is not happening. Few are willing to take a leadership position to establish a permanent remedy because it is easier to do nothing and they are not hearing from you.

Don't sit back and do nothing. Call your legislators. Let them know that you will be spending less in Texas businesses this winter which means less sales tax for them. High property taxes hurt the economy. We are being taxed into awareness. Demand change now and remember to protest your property value.

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