

# Opinion: Governor all wrong to raise taxes

By Ted Gaines

Every May the governor releases an updated version of his January budget proposal. This year's "May Revise" shows that Gov. Jerry Brown is dead set on growing government and raising taxes.

The new budget proposal has bits of good news. California's economy is so massive that even our weak economic recovery is generating an unexpected \$6.6 billion in additional tax revenue this year. Gov. Brown has wisely chosen to use some of the money to pay down debt. He is also proposing to eliminate some deadweight state boards and 5,500 government employee positions.



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The good news ends there. Remarkably, when the state is buckling under massive deficits year after year, Gov. Brown's detached-from-reality plan proposes increasing government spending 27 percent over the next three years.

To pay for his plan the governor wants to take an extra \$58 billion in new taxes from families and businesses through a five-year extension of the historic 2009 "temporary" tax increase that is set to expire this month. He has embraced these higher taxes and will not let them go, even though the

voters overwhelmingly rejected even a three-year extension just two years ago.

I do not support higher taxes on Californians. I want businesses to be able to keep their money and invest it, to expand and create jobs. I want families to keep more of their money to pay their bills, buy school clothes, take vacations and determine their own spending priorities.

The nation is struggling through the slowest economic recovery from any recession since World War II. California's recovery is slower still, and our unemployment rate is around 12 percent. Only a wildly out-of-touch political class could think about forcing families to break out their wallets and pay another \$1,000 a year to support an oversized state government.

Now is the time to be questioning why it costs California nearly \$50,000 a year to house a prisoner. Why does California have around 12 percent of the nation's population but a third of its welfare cases? Why did a survey of business leaders just rank California the worst state to do business – for the seventh year in a row?

California needs a government that provides basic public services at a price that taxpayers can afford. To suggest growing the public sector and raising taxes now, Brown's May Revise shows he is ignoring any meaningful reform and is intent on implementing the same tax-and-spend agenda that created our permanent budget crisis.

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