

Opinion: Sandoval was correct to adjust to 'new reality'

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Gov. Brian Sandoval got it exactly right when he explained his reversal on a handful of tax increases that were due to sunset next month: "I felt that I had to deal with a new reality."

"I know that some people perceive that as I broke my promise," the governor told the Associated Press' Sandra Chereb on Friday. "I think that's an oversimplification of what I had to deal with."

The possibility of "a new reality" is precisely why a candidate for public office shouldn't make the kind of promise that Sandoval and others, including those lawmakers who also found themselves backtracking in recent days, made during the campaign on taxes.

Sandoval pledged during the campaign that there would be no new taxes, no tax or fee increases and no extension of some tax increases approved at a 2010 special session of the Legislature to help the state weather a fiscal emergency.

That fiscal emergency continues today, and even Sandoval and his staff understood that the resulting budget would be devastating to the state. That's why they resorted to the budget gimmicks – taking money from school district construction reserves, for instance, or taking 9 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation from the counties – that caused so much trouble when the Nevada Supreme Court said that the state couldn't help itself to other government agencies' money.

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