



# SENATOR PAUL BETTENCOURT

DISTRICT 7

## For Immediate Release

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### Sen. Bettencourt Busts Another Property Tax Myth, that 'I Did Not Raise Your Taxes, Because I Did Not Raise Your Tax Rate'

**AUSTIN** – Sen. Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston), chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Property Tax Reform and Relief, today busted the property tax myth the committee has heard around the state from elected officials who say, “I didn’t raise your taxes, because I didn’t raise your tax rate.”

**“It is time to recognize the obvious in Texas: When property appraised values increase, and tax rates remain the same, that is a tax increase nearly all the time!”** Sen. Bettencourt said.

The Select Committee recently heard in testimony at its hearing in Plano that Collin, Montgomery, and Tarrant counties as well as the cities of Dallas, Houston and Fort Worth have all cut their tax rate this year by more than a penny. Tarrant County Tax Assessor-Collector Ron Wright told the Select Committee, **“There has never been this much movement in tax rates in a single year”** and publicly attributed this to the committee’s hearings in Arlington and across the state.

Major urban areas in Texas are experiencing rapid taxable value growth and, in the past, the vast majority of cities and counties generally leave their rate unchanged or only cut it slightly, taxpayers’ tax bills have increased. In Harris County, for example, the taxable values have increased by \$117 billion between 2011 and 2015, resulting in a nearly 53 percent increase in the county’s general fund property tax revenue or a calculated \$568 million. During the same time frame, Dallas County’s taxable values grew by \$33 billion, a 21 percent increase. Since Dallas County left their tax rate unchanged from 2011 to 2015, taxpayers paid 21 percent more by 2015 than they did in 2011.

**“Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins made a true attempt to cut the tax rate this year in his county, but lost the vote 3-2. Harris County, the largest county in the state, has not set its tax rate but publicly noticed an overall no change in the tax rate. Harris County should follow the lead of the other tax rate cutters,”** Sen. Bettencourt added.

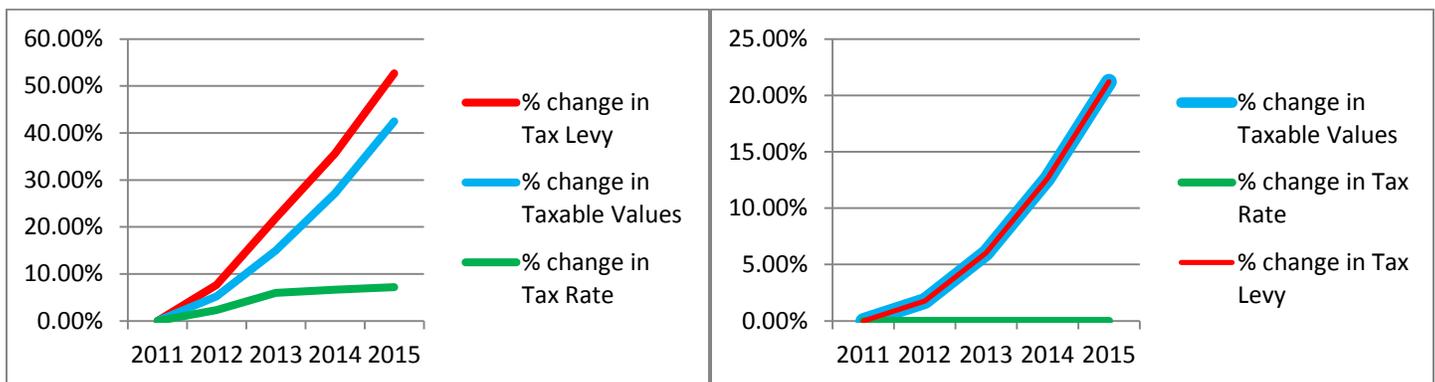


Figure 1: Harris County – General Fund

Figure 2: Dallas County – General Fund

**“When appraisal values skyrocket, tax rates should be reduced. Otherwise, property taxes go through the roof for both residential and commercial property owners alike,”** Sen. Bettencourt concluded.

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