

Fujinaga, Dot S.

From: Arlene & Jerry Ono [jamono@verizon.net]
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2006 6:26 PM
To: Dela Cruz, Donovan M
Subject: property tax relief

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CITY CLERK
HONOLULU, HAWAII

Dear Donovan;

My family and I live in Pearl City. We are a middle class family of 5 with one daughter in college and two middle school. Combined, my wife and I earned about \$95,000. On the surface, this would appear to be a decent income. However, we are struggling to maintain a simple no frills lifestyle but find ourselves slowly sinking. Unlike the government worker, we need to save for retirement. We are faced with rising day to day expenses, the need to save and pay for our children's college education (the middle school children is in public school), (our daughter worked hard to earn scholarships on the mainland but we are faced with paying \$15,000 out of pocket), sewer, gas and electricity bills went up exponentially higher than raises in wages (which puts us further behind last years moneys available for expenses) The tremendous increase in property taxes over the past 3 years have been a back breaker. It is incomprehensible that the city needs to increase its spending 30% over last years spending. The city needs to find ways to be thrifty and efficient with its monies. Any private company would go broke or fire its management team for incompetence. How could the city council watch Harris fleece the city without taking action to stop him? We rely on you all to safeguard us. I know I am rambling and venting. My point is, give the home owner occupants a break regardless of income reducing the rate based on length of residence of the home. Having higher property value only benefits those who sell and buy real estate and the city who can collect more money without having to raise tax rates (although it amounts to the same thing). If property values were kept lower, wouldn't it keep the prices of homes down since it would limit the amount of money the buyer could borrow towards purchase of a house and force sellers to reduce their asking price? We all have expenses that increased significantly over the past 2-3 years and we the middle class are struggling to make ends meet. Using earned income as a basis for your tax relief is unfair to those who work hard to get where they are at and don't forget people with free good retirement benefits is like having hidden income. They do not have to put away as much money today as we who have to save for our own retirement need. Stand up for we the over taxed citizens of Honolulu. I would appreciate a response.

Sincerely,
Jerry Ono