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## **After Defeat, City Doubles Down on their War on Taxpayers** *City of Austin Pursues Further Legal Action Against Taxpayers*

**Austin** - Yesterday, the Austin City Council adopted a resolution to support further legal action in their effort to increase property tax appraisals for commercial property owners and abolish longstanding taxpayer protections. This action by the City Council comes after Judge Tim Sulak of the 126th District Court in Travis County threw out the City's frivolous lawsuit seeking to increase commercial property values and eliminate established taxpayer protections last month. The judge's decision was a major victory for taxpayers.

**"Despite the court previously rejecting the City of Austin's outrageous arguments as I predicted, it appears the Austin City Council will continue their effort to increase taxes and deny Texans their due process rights," said Senator Bettencourt. "The city needs to abandon this war on taxpayers," he stressed.**

The city argued that they should not be required to even serve the 19,000 property owners affected by the lawsuit because it could cause "stress," "confusion," and "anger." The Senate Select Committee on Property Tax Reform and Relief will be studying these types of 'process' issues in the coming months.

**"After a 30% increase in taxable value in Austin in just three years, taxpayers are already under enough "stress," "confusion," and "anger" to quote the City's own legal filings," said Senator Bettencourt. "The City should abandon this absurd lawsuit; the Judge has already given a strong, legally correct ruling."**

This is a perfect example of why taxing units have been legally barred from participating in the appraisal process since the Peveto Bill passed in 1979. Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick recently formed a Select Committee on Property Tax Reform and Relief, which will be chaired by Senator Bettencourt, to study ways to end abuses like this once and for all. This type of behavior by a city will definitely impact the committee's recommendations.

The Select Committee on Property Tax Relief and Reform will hold its first meeting on Monday, December 7th, at 2:30 PM in E1.012 in the Capitol extension.

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