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Kalispell, Montana 59904
April 18, 2024

Members of Governor Gianforte's Property Tax Task Force
% Montana State Capitol, Room 204
Helena, Montana 59601
ATTN: Ryan Evans & Scott Mendenhall
Delivered via email

Dear Members of the Governor's Property Tax Task Force:

When announcing the establishment of your Property Tax Task Force in January, [Governor Gianforte identified](#) the need for "thoughtful, deliberate, long-term reforms to keep property taxes as low as possible." We could not agree more.

But with all due respect, we also believe the simplest and most feasible solution to provide Montana homeowners and renters with real and meaningful property tax relief doesn't require a task force. With Governor Gianforte's support, a simple legislative tax rate adjustment, as Republican and Democratic governors have done before, would shift the property tax burden away from Montana homeowners who are financially suffering from the Governor's historic tax increase.

So we write to flag what we believe should be an urgent new priority for your task force: Finding answers as to why the Governor's privately owned residence in Helena, at 618 Madison Avenue, received a 6.91 percent tax decrease in 2023 while at least 75 homes immediately surrounding his home all got hit with significant tax increases.

According to [our review of public property records](#), at least one home (520 Madison Avenue) in the Governor's Helena neighborhood got a 62 percent property tax increase. Another neighbor (600 Harrison Avenue) got slapped with a \$3,643.49 increase in 2023 (bringing their total tax bill to \$13,334.20).

But alarmingly, Governor Gianforte's privately owned home got a tax cut of nearly \$600 in 2023 compared to 2022. He paid less, while everyone else around him paid more. For your reference, here are the public records associated with these homes:

- **618 Madison Avenue** (Governor Gianforte's privately owned home, -6.91% [-\$594.70] tax cut in 2023): <https://itax.tylerapp.com/LewisAndClarkMT/detail.aspx?taxid=2898>
- **520 Madison Avenue** (62.02% [\$1,177.81] tax increase in 2023): <https://itax.tylerapp.com/LewisAndClarkMT/detail.aspx?taxid=5790>
- **600 Harrison Avenue** (37.6% [\$3,643.49] tax increase in 2023): <https://itax.tylerapp.com/LewisAndClarkMT/detail.aspx?taxid=21518>

Governor Gianforte also got hit with a significantly lower tax increase than his neighbors at his other mansion, in Bozeman. Public records there show Governor Gianforte's residential property in Gallatin County (1320 Manley Road) received only a 19.19 percent tax increase in 2023 compared to 2022. But his across-the-street neighbors at 1323 Manley Road received a staggering property tax increase of 70.6 percent in 2023.

- Here is the public tax comparison document for **1320 Manley Road**: <https://itax.gallatin.mt.gov/PDF/2023/MH/RFH9832.pdf>
- Here is the document for **1323 Manley Road**: <https://itax.gallatin.mt.gov/PDF/2023/MH/RFG9133.pdf>.

Public records also show that four of the five properties surrounding the governor's residence in Bozeman, owned by his East Gallatin LLC, also benefited from tax cuts in 2023, while many neighboring properties all received tax increases. For your reference, here are tax records of the properties owned by Governor Gianforte's East Gallatin LLC:

- **Property 1** (-18.33% tax cut in 2023): <https://itax.gallatin.mt.gov/PDF/2023/MH/RFH8716.pdf>
- **Property 2** (-17.96% tax cut in 2023): <https://itax.gallatin.mt.gov/PDF/2023/MH/RFH33533.pdf>
- **Property 3** (-14.82% tax cut in 2023): <https://itax.gallatin.mt.gov/PDF/2023/MH/RFH42175.pdf>
- **Property 4** (-11.23% tax cut in 2023): <https://itax.gallatin.mt.gov/PDF/2023/MH/RFG8516.pdf>

- **Property 5** (12.21% tax increase in 2023):
<https://itax.gallatin.mt.gov/PDF/2023/MH/RFH6883.pdf>

According to [a deeply concerning report](#) by the Montana Television Network, Governor Gianforte is claiming an agricultural exemption on 11.4 acres of riverfront property in Bozeman, on which his mansion sits. However, when questioned by MTN the Governor, who is neither a farmer nor a rancher, refused to explain his agricultural exemptions in Bozeman, or the controversy surrounding his Helena mansion.

We encourage you, as members of the Property Task Force, to immediately look into these concerning records. Montana taxpayers are suffering under the Governor's higher taxes, red tape, and his refusal to publicly explain why he pays less in property taxes than his neighbors. The People of Montana deserve transparency and clarity, and we urge you to provide it.

The Governor's Property Tax Task Force will not be trusted as a credible endeavor doing earnest work if it chooses to ignore the fact that the person who created it, Governor Gianforte, is rigging the system to benefit himself. You owe it to Montana taxpayers to investigate the Governor's questionable taxes first and foremost.

Sincerely,

/s/
Ryan Busse
Kalispell

/s/
Raph Graybill
Helena

CC: Governor Greg Gianforte