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**Subject:** Lawmakers attempting to ram through tax hike – again

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Hi Katherine,

I wanted to let you know about some shenanigans going on at the State House today. The subject? **A massive fee and tax hike on just about every taxpayer in the state.**

The bill raises hundreds of millions in new taxes in order to pour more money into our unaccountable road funding system – giving us the same system we have already, but forcing us to pay more for it. The legislation's supporters know full well how much outrage there is at the very idea that State House politicians would raise taxes and leave the system as it is.

And when I apply the word "massive" to this tax hike, I mean it. We're talking about **a dozen or more tax and fee hikes.**

So today, the Senate Finance committee took up this tax increase legislation, and from the beginning we suspected something was seriously wrong.

Over the past few weeks, remember, a few senators have been holding illegal **secret meetings** about the tax hike legislation. So we knew to expect something odd. And when some members seemed confused about what was happening, while others remained uncharacteristically quiet, we were pretty sure something sketchy was happening.

Without getting into the procedural weeds, it wasn't clear how the Senate Finance committee *even had the authority to consider the bill at all*. It was still on the Senate calendar, and hadn't been recommitted to

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Senate Finance. Senator Hugh Leatherman, who chairs the committee, wasn't inclined to explain what was going on.

So what was going on? We don't know – yet.

But here's what we *do* know. Lawmakers who want a tax increase – House and Senate members who want to leave our opaque and unaccountable system as it is – are ready to ram this tax hike through any way they can. They're going to try, and in the end they may get away with it.

Emphasis on the word *may*.

Here's what we *also* know, however. **They aren't going to do it in secret.** We aren't going to let them. We're going to report and publicize every move they make, and we're going to do it relentlessly, on weekdays and on weekends, for as long as it takes.

So stay tuned. The committee adjourned today, and it will reconvene at 1:30 pm tomorrow. If you're able, watch the debate [here](#). Also tomorrow, we'll have a quick, easy-to-read analysis of exactly what that secret committee came up with.

Meanwhile, if you want to keep up with what's going on with this debate in real time, follow us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#). And while you're at it, follow your local lawmakers, too, and find out what they have to say about it. When the debate comes, we'll be covering it live. Look for updates at [scpolitycouncil.org](#) and [TheNerve.org](#), too.

Thanks for staying engaged. None of this could happen without our members.

All the best,

Ashley Landess

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