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To: Lt. Governor's OfficeLtGov@scstatehouse.gov

Date: 12/24/2018 3:31:07 PM

Subject: Suspicious issue with County Assessor's Office

Attachments: Property Tax on Home 2018.pdf

I am truly hoping I can get some help from your office as I have been getting no response from our local County Assessor's Office here in Greer, SC - Spartanburg County. Our home was recently assessed with over a \$30K increase from previous years - although two neighbors who have the identical model of home/same builder had no increase. We then received a property tax bill for our home that is almost 5 times what we've paid every year for the past 10 years.

I had this house built in 2008 for \$170K, We are in a very rural area with no city septic/water. Our home had been appraised for \$166K - our property tax bill for 2016 was \$874.39. In 2017, the tax bill was \$838.53. For 2018, all of a sudden, our home has suddenly been appraised for \$190,000 (with no additions, no additional work on the home) and the tax bill we just received is \$3992.37. We have 2 neighbors on the same street with the exact same model of home whose appraisal and tax bill hasn't changed at all.

I'm a former Marine and worked at the Pentagon as a contractor for almost 20 years. I moved to SC and had a home built in 2008 - a home I still reside in. I married a few years later, but we didn't add my husband's name to the deed until we refinanced with Pentagon Federal Credit Union in October 2017. I hand-carried all the paperwork myself to our County office last year - no one said anything about needing to complete an application to "prove" I still live in the home.

Two weeks ago, I was in the gym and overheard a neighbor talking about a 6% property tax bill - I asked her what they had been talking about and she showed me a letter she had received from the County Assessor's office over the summer; we never received this letter. The letter states that "if you are eligible for the legal residence special assessment" that a form had to be completed and returned to their office to get a home property tax bill for 4% vice 6%. We made a copy of this letter and as soon as I got home, I called the Assessor's office to get more information. I was told to download a copy of the application from their website, complete it and also send copies of our complete income tax forms from the previous year, copies of both our drivers license, our marriage license and mail it to them. There was no way my husband and I were going to send such sensitive, private documents through the mail. I completed the application on my lunch hour (I'm a nurse at St Francis), faxed it to my husband; he left early from work and hand-carried all the requested documents to the County Assessor's Office. Our completed form was time-date stamped as having been received on December 12th.

My husband also asked them when we would be sent a tax bill with the new amount so we could get the info to PenFed who holds our mortgage, he was told that they "were too busy and might not get to our application" so we'd just have to pay the \$4000 tax bill and "maybe" it could be adjusted for the next tax year. When my husband came home and told me this, I called the office and spoke with Laura Davenport, assuming he had misunderstood, but I was told the same thing. I told her the letter I had finally gotten a copy of states that "failure to return this application may delay a revised tax bill beyond December 31st." Poor wording but we understood this to mean that the application needed to be received by the County Assessor's office prior to Dec 31st for our property tax to be 4% vice 6%,

which she confirmed. I asked why we would be expected to pay a 6% tax if we got our application in over a month before it is actually due. Again, we were told that the office is "just too busy and probably won't have time to do it." (Please see attached documentation).

Something does not seem right here - it's sounding as though someone is trying to make up for some missing funds at the great expense of the citizens of this county (we are in District 5). I voted for Governor McMaster in this last election as did my husband. I hope someone can please help us - this situation is just bizarre - we've never heard of anything like this. I have lived in South Carolina for 10 years now and I have never heard of such an application to prove I live in my own home. My husband was born and raised here and he's in disbelief as well. We are hoping your office will not let us down. Trust me - I am not happy to have to be spending time on this on Christmas Eve when I should be with my family in the other room.

We can be reached at any time at 864-303-0635.

Thank you,
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