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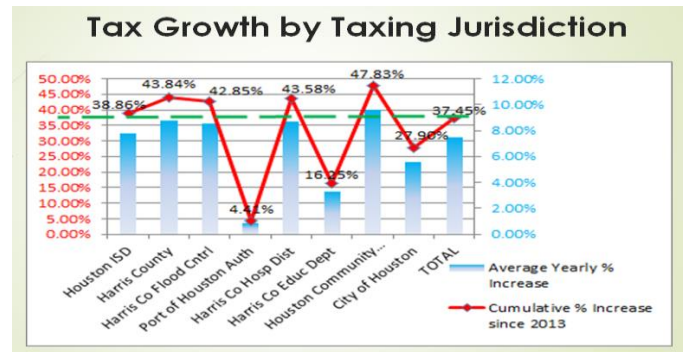
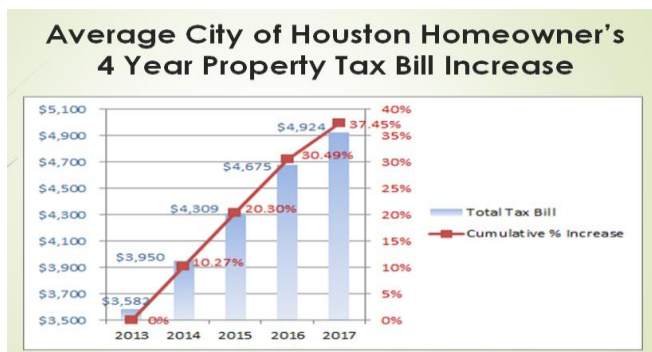
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Average Houston Home's Property Tax Payment Rises to Nearly \$5,000, Payment Due by January 31

Sen. Bettencourt highlights fact that property taxes for average Houston home are up 37% in four years

Houston - Texas State Senator Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston) highlighted just how rapidly property tax bills have increased on an average Houston home by releasing the 8-line property tax bill calculations below that show property taxes are up 37.45%, or \$1,341, in just four years. The average Houston home, with a market value of around \$235,000 will pay \$4,924 in property taxes, up dramatically from \$3,582 in 2013. Astonishing increases of this magnitude have a real impact on the ability of Houstonians to own a home. Property tax bills at the end of 2016 had already risen by 30%, this year's increase pushes that even higher to 37.45%.

"Even in my years as Tax Assessor, I have never seen an increase in property taxes this strong," said Senator Bettencourt. **"What has happened, especially in Harris County, values have increased and tax rates have not come down, resulting in crushing tax increases on the average Houston home."**



While the average increase is 37.45%, most taxing jurisdictions exceed that by either not cutting the tax rate, or in some cases actually raising their tax rates on top of appraised value increases. For example, Houston ISD and Houston Community College both raised their property tax rates. A few of the districts are below average, because their governing body has lowered their tax rate, or as in the case of the City of Houston, a voter approved charter amendment automatically lowered their property tax rate by five pennies, or a 28% increase.

"We just do not have a culture in government of giving taxpayers a break," continued Senator Bettencourt. **"Revenues continue to increase unchecked by any consideration for taxpayers' ability to pay. Property tax bills really are growing twice as fast as Texan's paychecks, and this is a real world example of it."**

As bad as these numbers are and unless taxpayers request payment plans, such as being over 65 or if they were impacted by Hurricane Harvey, if taxpayers miss their payment deadline on January 31, they can expect to pay penalties and interest, which is on average \$350 in February and an additional \$100 a month through July 1, when the tax roll is turned over for collections. Harvey reappraisals are in the mail for requesting taxing units.

Property tax reform was derailed in the Texas Special Session when the House adjourned a day early, leaving the Texas Senate with a take it or leave it bill that would only provide 4 out of 254 counties with tax relief. The Senate Select Committee on Property Tax Reform, appointed by Lt. Governor Patrick and chaired by Senator Bettencourt, will convene hearings to discuss disaster reappraisal and these massive increase. You can follow the committee's progress online at: <http://www.senate.state.tx.us/cmte.php?c=585>.