



JAMES NOACK
COMMISSIONER PRECINCT 3
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

1130 Pruitt Road
Spring, Texas 77380
Email: commissionernoack@mctx.org

Conroe: (936) 539-7817
Houston: (281) 367-3977
Fax: (281) 298-7321

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Dear Elected Official/Department Head:

As we begin to prepare for the 2018 budget we do so in unprecedented times. The political winds are blowing across our state from Montgomery County to Austin. Taxpayers want to see lower property taxes and we must do our part.

I view property tax reform as a three-legged stool. The legs are represented by: Appraisals, Tax Rate/Exemptions, and Spending. Legislators and the court can tackle legs one (appraisals) and two (exemptions/tax rate), but since it's a three-legged stool it doesn't do much good for the taxpayer if the third leg isn't in place. The third leg is the key. Without spending reform in Montgomery County, the effect of lower appraisals and exemptions would be negated by increases in spending.

I need your help to reduce spending. I am asking all departments to identify a 5% reduction in your total budget. I would not ask you do anything that I have not already done. My management team and I have identified and will submit our 2018 budget request with a 5 percent reduction in spending.

Please let me know if you have any questions or if I can be of assistance. Your cooperation in this effort is appreciated.

Respectfully,

Commissioner James Noack