Higher Taxes in Oklahoma

Oklahoma can increase teacher pay without increasing sales taxes or adding new taxes.

Cost to give every one of Oklahoma’s 42,027 current public school teachers a $5,000 pay raise AND hire 1,000 new classroom teachers:

$284.5 million

David Boren’s 22% sales tax increase would give Oklahoma the highest sales taxes, 9.7%, in the U.S.

Wasteful or non-essential state government spending that can be eliminated without hurting core services like education, roads and bridges, or public safety:

$617.3 million

WHY would we increase Oklahoma’s state sales tax rate by 22% and force Oklahoma families to pay what would be the highest average combined state-and-local sales tax rate, 9.7%, in the nation?

WHY would we make it more difficult for cities and towns across Oklahoma to support police, fire safety, utilities and other local services?

WHY would we increase Oklahoma’s sales tax burden, already the sixth-highest in the nation, and place an undue burden on low- and middle-income families, single mothers, veterans and senior citizens?

THERE’S A BETTER WAY TO INCREASE TEACHER PAY

A PLAN FOR ACTION:

1. Eliminate some of the $617.3 million in wasteful or non-essential state government spending (Flip over for more details)

2. Give every Oklahoma teacher a $5,000 pay raise AND hire 1,000 additional classroom teachers

www.StopHigherTaxesOK.com
Some of Oklahoma’s wasteful or non-essential state government spending that could be eliminated to fund teacher pay raises:

- Sell the Italian monastery, in Tuscany, owned by the Univ. of Oklahoma = $20 million (or, $5,000 salary increase for 4,000 Oklahoma teachers)
- Stop appropriating tax dollars to state government agencies that are already funded with fees they collect = $20 million ($5k salary increase for 4,000 teachers)
- Sell already-identified unused state assets = $11 million ($5k salary increase for 2,200 teachers)
- Stop paying association dues for legislators, funding non-critical legislator and state employee travel, paying for unnecessary media advertising and sponsorship of athletic events, and paying for “swag” merchandise = $39.8 million ($5k salary increase for 7,960 teachers)
- Utilize best practices for purchasing health insurance coverage for state and education employees, as is done for county and municipal government employees and in the private sector across Oklahoma = $42 million ($5k salary increase for 8,400 teachers)
- Perform telecommunications audits as utilized by private employers = $3 million ($5k salary increase for 600 teachers)
- Auction the Weitzenhoffer art collection, owned by the Univ. of Oklahoma, containing at least one painting allegedly stolen by the Nazis during the Holocaust, plus works by Van Gogh, Monet, Renoir, and others = $50 million ($5k salary increase for 10,000 teachers)
- Implement reforms of Oklahoma’s Medicaid system like those producing cost savings and improved health outcomes in LA, KS, FL and other states = $100 million ($5k salary increase for 20,000 teachers)
- Stop overly subsidizing Career Tech functions when tech centers are sitting on millions of dollars in un-used building funds = $3 million ($5k salary increase for 600 teachers)
- Stop subsidizing failed attempts at space travel = $300,000 ($5k salary increase for 60 teachers)
- Stop subsidizing losses on state-owned golf courses = $200,000 ($5k salary increase for 40 teachers)
- Stop subsidizing rodeos, county fairs and museums that charge admission = $8 million ($5k salary increase for 1,600 teachers)
- Properly allocate state funding for Oklahoma Teachers Retirement System and bill federal government for its full share of funding = $20 million ($5k salary increase for 4,000 teachers)
- Sell the Grand River Dam Authority, which could still then provide electrical power to northeast Oklahoma when privately owned = $300 million ($5k salary increase for 60,000 teachers)

Total possible savings by cutting wasteful or non-essential Oklahoma state government spending: $617.3 million

Cost to give every Oklahoma teacher a $5,000 pay raise AND hire 1,000 new teachers: $284.5 million

Sources: National Education Association, Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs, Oklahoma Watch, The Oklahoman, Tax Foundation