



Indiana Commission on Local Government Reform Summary of Public Input: August 16 – August 31, 2007

The excerpted statements below summarize public comments received by the Indiana Commission on Local Government Reform through the commission's web site, e-mail address, or by mail between August 16, 2007 and August 31, 2007. Comments specifically about property taxes have been forwarded to the Commission on State Tax and Financing Policy.

- Nepotism in local government needs to end; many offices could be combined.
- Property tax system is unfair/uneven; suggest across the board sales tax.
- Make homestead and mortgage exemptions automatic.
- Do not eliminate township assessor's office.
- Eliminate township layer of government.
- Offer more part-time work and/or job sharing.
- Raise sales tax (even on food) to relieve property tax burden.
- Combine county and city police and fire departments; combine all schools under one budget; combine all street and county road departments to reduce number of government officials and administrators.
- Eliminate state, property, and local taxes and replace with 10% sales tax.
- Create central payroll system for any state, city, or county employee.
- Higher sales tax; consolidate county sheriff with local police, fire departments and assessors; better self-service at Bureau of Motor Vehicles; streamline zoning boards; put spending limits on school corporations; use Family and Social Services Administration for child support payments.
- Do another round of school consolidations.
- Daylight savings time should be outlawed for all of Indiana.
- Allow Health and Hospital Corporation to provide the only Emergency Medical Service in Marion County and disallow fire departments to charge paramedic services to property taxes.
- Use fax instead of USPS to save postage.
- Reduce redundancy in calculating personal property tax; allow the state to maintain aerial photos and release the county's responsibility.
- Consolidate child support office; automate more services; allow an IT consulting firm to analyze the state's business practices; follow Cleveland, OH model of taxing commuters.
- Eliminate local government; property taxes or set rate at 1% and set sales tax at 8%.
- Make vehicular license plates renewable every two years.
- Why does a commission need to be created every time something happens? Who pays these people?; Do we need mile markers along the interstate-get some use of billboards; state buildings should turn lights off; hire welfare recipients to clean highway trash and give them drug tests.
- Create an opportunity for comparison between like local government entities to identify best practices.
- Replace property tax with sales tax.
- Consolidate school systems.
- Combine fire and police departments.
- Eliminate township trustee position.



- Allow number of city councilors based on population; eliminate property tax and replace with 20% sales tax; one township trustee per county; and mandatory drug test for poor relief recipients; pass a law that requires school boards to meet on Saturdays so more citizens can attend the meetings; pass legislation requiring all new school construction be made with durable materials and include only basic structure design (not swimming pools, football stadiums, and fancy sports fields -pay for these with parent donations or bake sales); limit school administrative staff to three (principal, vice principal, and head of vocational guidance; All public employees must take drug screening at intake and randomly at least two times a year. If found on drugs not prescribed by physician, remove them from any and all programs. Give the children of these drug users CASAs to provide necessities, be flexible and allow CASAs to be volunteers not paid a salary; cut per diem to legislators; get rid of the Governor's Mansion; take all deaf children out of public schools where there are getting sub-standard interpreters and put them at the Indiana School for the Deaf; stop using state medicaid to pay for cochlear implants, it does nothing to truly help a child become like a hearing person; stop banning gambling and allow people to decide by county if they want casinos or cherrypickers in their bars, then tax them at 40% of the take. At least three people on the Commission should be making less than \$100,000/year gross.
- Apply principles of Lean, Six-Sigma, and robust Process Management using valid customer requirements, precise process metrics, and change facilitation and leadership training for governmental managers and bureaucrats.
- Foreclosure rate has increased because individuals are lead to believe taxes are one amount but then are increased and they cannot afford them.
- Property tax rate should be the same across the state.
- Property tax is too high.
- Repeal the Indiana common wage law.
- Manage money better.
- Decrease property tax; consolidate schools to counties; reduce duplication of services.
- Eliminate local option income tax and replace with sales tax.
- Replace government officials with ones who care about the welfare of the voters.
- Consolidate smaller municipalities; consolidate police and fire departments; eliminate salaries for unnecessary, unproductive employees; find out if these employees go on unnecessary trips, conferences, and golf outings at taxpayers' expense.
- Eliminate township governments and property tax.
- Reduce number of assessors offices and replace staff with trained, licensed appraisers. Create one tax rate.
- Eliminate duplication of services provided at county and township levels.
- Combine police and fire departments; city government should not be paying for the new stadium; build a metro rail system to bus hub; limit abuse of fire and emergency medical services.
- Rearrange townships and reduce duplication to save money; Marion County should not be the only one to shoulder expense of sports stadium.
- Reform property taxes.
- Change property tax to income tax or sales tax.
- To save money, have a longer period of time before license plates are replaced.
- Repeal property tax, it will draw business; if you draw welfare make them take a drug test; find work for able bodied welfare recipients like picking up trash along I-465; remove law that lets elected county sheriff have 6-figure income; fine businesses that hire illegals; do not hire or give free handouts to illegals; stop businesses from polluting;



make lobbying illegal; make non profits pay taxes, too; cut waste. Consolidate county health departments to local health districts.

- Simplify the property tax assessment for purchases/sales.
- Cut paid committees; use non-violent prisoners for sanitation crews; use less expensive cars for government officials; have law enforcement patrol smaller towns; remove duplicated offices.
- Give incentives to American manufacturers and not to foreign companies; healthcare costs are outrageous but illegal immigrants get that and other services for free; high cost of uninsured motorists; raise fees in the Child Support Division; there is a lack of recycling programs at the city, county, and state government offices and money saved could provided bonuses to underpaid state workers.
- Instead of free health care to low income people, take their income tax refund to pay for it.
- Instead of reducing an agency budget when at year end because they haven't spent all allocated money, give back half of excess to the state and divide the rest among the employees; cut waste of envelopes, paper clips and leaving cars running when unattended.
- Please place job descriptions and where duties overlap of all government employees on website so he can provide well thought out ideas. Provide fair taxation, no assessors are needed.
- Attorneys and politicians are corrupt.
- Hire professionals for local offices; look for currently underfunded programs not new ones; State should not support horse tracks; provide equal financial support to all Indiana schools.
- Non profits should pay taxes; schools should be run as a business; retired and empty nesters should not have to pay property taxes; the General Assembly and City County Council have failed.
- Refers to Senator Fred Thompson's Fair Tax proposal (www.fairtax.org)
- Complaint about Fort Wayne School system; property taxes are unfair; complaint about the new baseball stadium in Fort Wayne.
- The property tax problem belongs to the state.
- Work toward a new constitution; property taxes capped at 1% of fair market value; fewer elected officials, the governor and mayors need more authority; retain a part-time General Assembly; consolidate school districts and libraries; eliminate township governance; consider issues on a regional basis; flexibility in recommendations is essential; adaptability to change and growth needs to be a price consideration; transition toward a professional city/county manager; should be check and balance on taxing authority.
- Property tax reform--moratorium for elderly; consolidation of surveyor/recorder/assessor offices; eliminate tax sale.
- Cut layers of bureaucracy.
- Bring back inventory tax; turn Union Station into a casino and tax them; drop exemptions for churches; tax apartment dwellers
- Consolidate school systems.
- Combine counties.
- Establish flat property tax per residence.
- Complaint about the shut-down of 24/7 ambulance service in Gregg Township.
- Cut school spending (no fancy buildings and highly paid administrators); keep local government.



- Have boundaries for all taxing districts within a community as identical; create oversight for TIF Districts.
- Abolish property tax.
- Government has lost the trust of the American people; abolish property tax; stop spending.
- Keep efficient government, but look at overlapping agencies.
- Increase sales tax, income tax, county tax, cigarette tax, gasoline tax, and local entertainment tax; remove state agencies from local support.
- The higher costs are associated with capital spending by schools, jails, courthouses, etc. The taxpayer needs referendum voting powers.
- Vanderburgh County has too many employees in assessors office and they are not busy.
- Remove authority of any office of entity who has little or no oversight or transparency; Repeal all property tax; create harsher penalties for elected officials caught breaking law.
- Tax all including the currently tax exempt.
- Eliminate township assessors; abolish property tax; use local income tax, slight increase to sales tax, reduced spending, couple that with "transfer" tax to supplement loss; eliminate township government.
- Rein in school spending; don't hire Spanish speaking teacher for one Spanish speaking student; get tough on illegals draining our social services; reduce or eliminate state owned cars for private use; eliminate property tax
- Repeal property tax; remove all assessors, staff and outside contractors; remove Sue Ellen Reed and staff; put control of schools at local level; stop using lottery profits for Build Indiana; reduce the size of government; make tax structure transparent; increase sales and income tax; all taxpayers to vote on these issues.
- Ask the Commission to investigate the approval of Harrison Square when 70% of the voters were against the stadium, purchase of \$12 million of private property without securing an appraisal and with city council approval, inability to receive financial statements from contractors assigned to Harrison Square, and other issues related to Harrison Square and the lack of due diligence by local government.
- Combine all townships in a county.
- Consolidate township functions; consolidate school districts into city or county; allow voting on all bond issues, borrowing and building projects; supports constitutional amendment for reorganizing local government, schools taxes and limiting spending; Elkhart built a multimillion dollar baseball park and band practice field as well as an excessively expensive jail without voter approval. Shifting taxes without cutting spending will help no one.
- Instead of looking at local government look at state government
- The major problems lie with the public school system, police and fire, other state and locally owned buildings and property. The emphasis in future spending should be placed first in the quality of administration and teachers, then the technology within the building to keep our kids at the front of technology, and lastly the building itself. The actual building's main construction criteria should be that it is as safe, utility efficient, and construction cost efficient as possible. The other option is to make a change to the Indiana constitution that requires free public education to everyone. Maybe the taxpayers could take a vote on whether of not to build that \$2.6 million football field, weight room, and gym. The schools must also adopt a policy to hold the parents accountable for their children's actions and support the teachers and the children that are trying to earn an education. A family could select the school they believe meets their



values. The schools would have to compete in price and quality of education; Families would pay according to how many children they have just like they would have to for college; public protection systems: First, all police should be a state-run police force. The buildings would be built as needed when the population increases in an area; Pay would be equal among officers with adjustments made for the cost of living in the area they work in; Second, fire departments should share the same structure as police departments and schools. Instead, the money spent building more efficient buildings could be used to train and pay well-qualified firefighters and keep up with the technologies that are so rapidly developing in this field; Finally, we have to evaluate how we spend money on other public buildings. Once again, we need to model the proposed schools and public safety building concept. Uniforms, cars, weapons, communication, light systems, armor, training, swat, drug enforcement, etc. would all be the same making an officer more efficient anywhere in the state; current tax system is too complicated and unfair. Replace all taxes with an income tax system without; aAn electric department building does not need expensive windows, expensive roofing, and marble floors; exemptions.

- By not collecting property tax schools have to take out loans and pay large amounts of interest-fire the governor.
- Abolish the township government; consolidate library boards within counties; library board members should be elected, not appointed.
- Are sheriffs and township constables needed-cites dollars for each township given to constables.
- Change constitution requirement from coroner to Medical Examiner making the function more professional and efficient.
- Allow professional City Managers to manage cities.
- LGR is narrow minded and short-term fix. Focus on illegal aliens who reap all the benefits without paying. All businesses should be required to supply proof that all workers are legal.
- Consolidate public and school libraries
- Third class cities should switch from Mayor to City Manager
- Replace property tax with sales tax and income tax.
- Township government should be eliminated.
- Will the commission address government waste, in particular, riverboat gambling money, misuse of power, and government money that belongs to the tax powers?
- Take school funding out, use 2% sales tax to spread the burden fairly
- Non profits should pay taxes; establish a User Fee instead of property taxes. Tax buildings, not bare ground.
- Put the county in charge of assessments.
- No townships, one county government, eliminate redundant system.
- Get rid of bureaucratic jobs; stop allowing schools to be built like palaces, concentrate on academics, not sports arenas.
- Get rid of township and county property tax assessors.
- County sheriff should not receive fee for collection of delinquent taxes; public employees should not vote on issues affecting agencies that employ them; eliminate township assessors and constables; assessors, auditors, treasurers, surveyors should have professional degrees; limit property taxes on senior citizens; eliminate township trustees with one county trustee; donut counties around Marion County should pay a portion of Marion County taxes.
- Consolidate schools; eliminate property taxes to sales tax and income tax or remove schools and welfare concerns from property tax.



- I could do a "good job" helping to streamline Indiana budget.
- Consider libraries and boundary adjustments for various taxing entities.
- Combine county and local police departments.
- Increase sales or income tax instead of charging property tax.
- Provided a written proposal "Indianapolis-Marion County Government Reform Proposal" Think and Manage Regionally--Act Locally. I support government consolidation. The current government structure in the City of Indianapolis – Marion County is becoming extremely costly with excessive spending, several taxing authorities with little to no accountability and several layers of government. The City of Indianapolis needs change to become more effective and efficient with taxpayer money and this program will allow for communities and townships to help manage the change and not let the change to manage them. Indianapolis should consider the use of Community Council or Priority Boards, a more formalized mechanism for citizen input. Community Councils exist throughout the country Portland, OR, Los Angeles, CA, St. Paul, MN, Salt Lake City, UT: The creation of Community Councils bring more involvement at the local neighborhood level and allows citizens to voice concerns and assist in the development of their community. Care must be taken to gain input from low income residents and renters. A communication system is critical to making this concept work.
- When commission is finished with local governments, move to state government.
- Remove property tax burden from senior citizens.
- Township trustee/assessors should be abolished in favor of a uniform process managed by the state.
- Consolidation effort underway in southeast Boone County using HEA 1362 (2006) (www.ibccn.org/reorg/pdf/resolution%20Organization.pdf).
- Retired on Social Security, difficult to pay property tax. State must accept some of the school expense burden.
- Suggest a former assessor as good reference from grassroots, Connie Prible-Jones. Suggest full-time executive in charge of county employees; eliminating a number of elected positions that oversee admin, non-policy making offices; consolidating offices such as treasurer and auditor.
- What causes the disparity in budgets for various townships in Vanderburgh County- efficiency of officials, cost of facilities? Property tax payers must absorb tax abated and tax exempt properties; emergency poor relief should be given to one non-profit organization; fire protection should be under same umbrella as fire protection for city residents; should not be Vanderburgh County vs the City of Evansville-must be one entity.
- Reconciliation to property tax bills causes problems with federal tax return.
- Consider long-term welfare: grant one or two months of free monies, then offer continuance of support if women agree to birth control shot.
- Get rid of woman who runs this township office and her assistant. The rest are good and honest people.
- Has outlined through a series of essays a plan for reforming local government. See www.219.com. Suggests reverse engineering method to solving tax crisis and changing the form and presenting taxpayer with itemized bill showing how much each taxing unit charges, accompanied by total amount charged previous year, and % of change; property tax should be based on fair market value with trending; governance in cities and towns, offices of elected judges and prosecutor remain unaltered replace county commissioners with county executive officer, auditor with chief financial officer, sheriff and coroner be appointed by CEO, expand county council to 12, budgets and levies be approved by majority council vote, township assessors are appointed; Local officials find it difficult to save money because it means saying "no" which might cost them their job;



school corporations budget be divided into half: half investment directly associated with academics and half in everything else, the extra curricular activities; steps to achieve the change to local government: constitutional convention, election of delegates to convention, proposal for changes, hearings, delegate vote to proposal, ratification, Governor's signature; asks that blame not fall on the Department of Local Government Finance or the State Board of Accounts - it is the system which can be conflicted, chaotic and confusing.

- Replace property tax with income and/or increased sales tax; abolish county/township assessors; reduce spending on "pet" projects.
- Tax all at same rate; eliminate property tax assessors.
- Non-profits should not be exempt from property taxes; tax abatements and TIF funding is "double dipping" and long-time residents pay for new developments and developer gets profits.
- Abolish township assessor, trustee, and constable.
- Evaluate property taxes; set library tax rate equal to or below the current county library rate for all libraries in that county.
- Eliminate property taxes, increase local income taxes
- If property tax is lowered significantly by local option income and/or sales tax, adopt real estate excise tax; pool that money statewide and provide grant money to local school districts, impose some standards to govern school construction; move township duties to counties; merge county councils and commissions; allow county sheriffs to be appointed by the executive.
- Eliminate conflict of interest and cronyism.
- Grant local communities Home Rule capability to use Hometown Matters, etc; revise income tax distribution formula; collect sales tax receipts by sale location; hire local officials based on qualifications not popularity; consolidate services; consolidate school corporations; consolidate parks and recreation.
- Townships are too expensive, is against continual increase in government size, overlap is excessive.
- Abolish property taxes; responsible, transparent spending by local officials; elections coordinated for maximum voter participation; eliminate unnecessary and inefficient township government wherever possible, control spending.
- Enact no change until it can be demonstrated that taxpayers will receive better service at reduced cost-identify purpose of mission; incorporate university thought; hire excellent school administrators.
- Reform or eliminate township government.
- Remove authority of any office or entity who has little or no oversight or transparency, constables, township boards, trustees, assessors, anything with the word "Special" in it, bond banks, capital improvement boards, airport authority boards, library boards, convention center boards.
- Allow counties to investigate a move to an "executive" form of organization; professionals, not politicians, should do assessing, treasurer functions, and auditing.
- Dissolve townships except in unincorporated areas because of duplication. Lake County resists income tax because money may not be returned to same city to alleviate property tax. Pressure leaders to adopt Good Government Initiatives [see http://www.iun.edu/~lga/ggi_phase1/ Northwest Indiana Local Government Academy whose mission is to promote excellence in both government and governance by providing educational opportunities that will enhance the leadership and decision skills of local elected officials, public employees and citizens."]
- Eliminate property tax.



- Eliminate property tax.
- Assess a home at the higher of: selling price, current total of mortgages and equity loans, or latest assessment for loan or sell; set a common property tax rate throughout the state and redistribute money from state locally by some formula.
- Publish true list of all services and functions funded by local government and their respective budgets; public schools should no longer have the right to upgrade sports facilities; stop major sports from building their dream houses; all non-exempt, non profits should pay for police/fire services by fee; eliminate underinsured motorists; change constitution to disallow sheriffs from being able to collect 10% tax imposed penalties.
- Investigate statewide healthcare options for public school teachers.
- Eliminate township government; consolidate/eliminate all countywide offices into commissioners, council, clerk, and sheriff. Hire county manager to run professional bureaucracy; update all IT systems to be compatible.
- Consider recommending some "protections" for citizens and taxpayers to temper an adverse reaction from many who may not agree with your recommendations. Some protections include a maximum percent increase in property taxes, voter approved bond measures, establishing a popular initiative process to enable citizens to collect signatures of proposed new laws; and the elimination of local redevelopment commissions..
- Eliminate township offices; consolidate fire departments; school taxes should be put on ballot as bond issues if residential property taxes cannot be abolished; fix residential property tax at selling price the last time it changed ownership; do not abolish property taxes, but increase local option income tax and sales tax to make up for short fall.
- Abolish the property tax and stop pork barrel spending.
- Stop excessive spending by allowing taxpayers to vote to control spending with ballot referendums for bond issues, etc.
- Eliminate tax loopholes and stop some of the crookedness in Indiana; all political offices should be a two year period and only one term
- Eliminate township trustees; part-time elected public officials should not be afforded total paid health care (commissioners, county council, etc.); sheriff should not be allowed to keep any funds other than what is declared in his salary; eliminate property tax and increase sales tax; more oversight on local work; standardized methodology for all tax, court, and law enforcement systems (one unified software solution) for the state.
- County/township assessors should not be abolished in favor of a uniform process managed by the state. This would eliminate our local rule. All government agencies must be closely audited to eliminate unnecessary spending.
- Consolidate fire departments.
- Save on air conditioning-start school in September.
- Township trustee is a joke, when asked for help, he says no, never once helped the town.
- I am a Libertarian. Republicans are hypocrites; alcohol prohibition caused more crime, drug laws cause more crime.
- Eliminate 1/4 to 1/3 of the counties. Go regional.
- Ask the Calumet Assessor what he is doing. The federal government should be funding schools. What happened to the money promised schools from the lottery and casinos?
- Cap property taxes for senior citizens.
- Do not use property tax as primary source of income-eliminate or drastically reduce and replace with income and sales tax. Each county should have only one person charged with tax assessing and should be a qualified appointee; surveyor, auditor, etc should be appointed and have specialized knowledge.



- "Political farse?" "Whenever a politician wants to give the appearance of doing something while doing nothing, he/she appoints a 'blue ribbon panel' to study the issue and report back."
- Please consider the plight of the senior citizen when making recommendations for property tax reform.
- Live within budget; if schools want more money-put to popular vote; utilize income tax, but use it less than sales tax to reduce property tax; too many layers of government.
- Cut spending at all levels of government; consolidate many layers, i.e. townships; transfer welfare and poor relief to state; require all capital projects over "x" amount to be approved by referendum; all the people to vote on constitutional amendment to abolish property taxes; shift required revenues from property taxes to combination of statewide sales and income tax.
- Eliminate many layers of government; if property taxes are retained assessors must have them done on time; reduce cost of government; eliminate duplication of services;
- Offers a formula to replace property tax with sales tax, i.e., reduce real estate taxes to one-half to two-thirds what it was prior to 2006; charge sales tax on parts and labor; charge 2-2.5% on local taxes, 1% goes to schools, state taxes graduated from 3% to 6% based on income, etc.
- Offers eight suggestions regarding fees, levies, usage taxes, commingling of building funds, etc. Also, eliminate townships; assign duties of county surveyor to Indiana Geologic Survey.
- Government actions impacting the public must follow strict procedures and requirements; taxes should benefit the public as a whole not individually for a \$10,000,000 high school football stadium.
- School spending should be approved by voters; consider sales tax for school funding.
- Reduce taxing units; decrease townships; organize school districts.
- Life begins at conception; English is state language; consolidate schools by county; consolidate libraries; consolidate law enforcement agencies; age 64+ cannot be taxed by the state; consolidate fire departments; abolish township governments; not tax imposed or increased or changed without direct approval by voters; abolish property taxes; convicted prisoners forfeit all property until victims receive restitution, etc.; illegal or undocumented aliens in Indiana may not be employed; public schools funded by parents; lawful to carry concealed weapon.
- Assessment should be done by county by capable appointed position; township assistance duties transferred to welfare office; carefully consider any changes to fire and emergency protection; consider how they will run before transfer of any township park.
- Budget paid for in thirds from income, sales and property taxes; cap property tax increase at inflation; revise exemptions like hospitals, lodges and churches; tax abatements for new construction out of hand-abolish them.
- Revamp education system-swimming pools or education? Refers to John Stossel's book for solution.
- Increase tax on beer and alcohol.
- Consolidate township government, especially Fire Departments for greater efficiency.
- Read Brian Howie's article and agrees with IndyWorks; township government is outdated and must be eliminated, consolidate fire departments.
- Provides "This Pastor has Guts" prayer.
- Their township trustee function is pared down to poor relief and cemeteries. Time to look at their cost vs. functions.



- Consolidating local governments is part of Republican desire to reduce the size of government and reduce services for most citizens. I oppose these reductions. Give assessors time to learn new skills and adjust to market-based assessments.
- Make the decisions to consolidate, simply, unify and save tax money
- Was township assessor for 12 years. Feels position is no longer needed, all work is done by appraiser's research, none have Level 2 qualifications.
- Unnessary offices: constables, trustees (consolidate fire departments), township assessors (one per county). Standardize property taxes.
- No reason why taxes are not already paid? Eliminate property tax and make new tax on wages or sales. Property taxes are never fair.
- Save money in collective bargaining arena; state sponsored healthcare plan for teachers; statewide teacher pay schedule
- Property taxes should be a state level tax; infrastructure improvements must be approved by vote; additional revenues from increasing state, income, gasoline and "sin" tax rates. Unhappy with Harrison Square in Ft. Wayne.
- Slow down and look at long-term consequences of quick fix to property tax problem. Consider: Who would buy big ticket item in Indiana with sales tax at 13%?; More expensive homes should have higher taxes; need people with business sense to work on this.
- Trustee office is outmoded and not needed; nepotism is frequent; misuse of funds, i.e., use home as office and charge taxpayers rent; buy cars and have name printed on side.
- Township system is no longer viable; assessed value should be permanently assigned based on value today with changes when ownership changed or significant alterations or additions are made; costs of essential government services above and beyond the established assessed valuation could be made up by income, sales taxes and user fees.
- It should be Indiana policy to encourage owner-occupied homes; thus homestead exemptions should not apply to business, including rentals; truck fees should be based on weight-distance basis because loads applied cause more damage than just total vehicle.
- Township trustee seems antiquated and outdated; voters in Marion County bear unreasonable burdens because of hospitals, churches, nonprofits, and government building that put burden on homeowners; business should pay their fair share
- Use a uniform process managed by the state to assess property tax; no mayor or city council should be allowed to annex and then change the zoning of land that is in a different school district-providing benefits to developers; consolidate school districts.
- A poem about too many taxes; the root cause is politicians.