

Commissioner of Political Practices 1209 Eighth Avenue Post Office Box 202401 Helena, MT 59620-2401 Phone: 406-444-2942 Fax : 406-444-1643 www.politicalpractices.mt.gov

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Campaign Finance and Practices

Complaint Form (08/17)

Type or print in ink all information on this form except for verification signature

Person bringing complaint (Complainant): Complete Name Sandi Luckey - Executive Director, Montana Democratic Party Complete Mailing Address PO Box 802 Helena, MT 59624 Phone Numbers: Work 406-442-5920 Home

Person or organization against whom complaint is brought (Respondent): Complete Name Greg Gianforte, Greg for Montana, Republican Governor's Assoc. Complete Mailing Address PO Box 877 Helena, MT 59624 Phone Numbers: Work 406-594-0904 Home

Please complete the second page of this form and describe in detail the facts of the alledged violation.

Verification by oath or affirmation

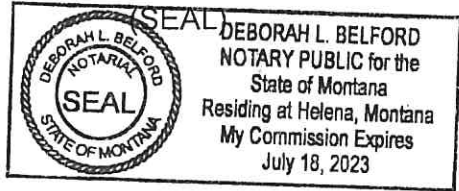
State of Montana, County of L&C

I, Sandi Luckey, being duly sworn, state that the information in this Complaint is complete, true, and correct, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature of Complainant

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 23 day of October, 2020.

Notary Public Deborah L. Belford



My Commission Expires: 7/18/2023

**Statement of facts:**

Describe in detail the alleged violation(s) and cite the statute or statutes you believe have been violated. Please attach copies of documentary evidence to support the facts alleged in your statement.

If the space provided below is insufficient, you may attach additional pages as necessary.

See Attached

**Complaints must be:**

- signed
- notarized
- delivered in person or by mail.

October 23, 2020

Commissioner Jeff Mangan  
Commissioner of Political Practices  
1209 Eighth Avenue  
P.O. BOX 202401  
Helena, MT 59620-2401  
[cpphelp@mt.gov](mailto:cpphelp@mt.gov)

Dear Commissioner Mangan:

Pursuant to Rule 44.11.106 of the Montana Administrative Rules, this letter and the accompanying Campaign Finance and Practices Complaint Form serve as a written complaint against Greg Gianforte; and Greg for Montana and its Treasurer, Lorna Kuney; and the Republican Governors Association (“**RGA**”). The available facts strongly suggest that Greg for Montana (“**the Committee**”) and RGA likely violated Mont. Admin. R. 44.11.605 and the COPP’s recent guidance about the reporting of coordinated and electioneering communications. We request the Commissioner on Political Practices (“**COPP**”) immediately investigate these violations and take swift remedial action against the Committee and RGA before the general election on November 3, 2020.

#### **A. Factual Background**

Greg Gianforte is a Republican candidate for governor in Montana.<sup>1</sup> His campaign committee is Greg for Montana (“**the Committee**”).<sup>2</sup> RGA is a national political organization “dedicated to one primary objective: electing and supporting Republican governors.”<sup>3</sup>

The Committee and RGA have been posting official statements using the same slogans and information to promote Mr. Gianforte and attack Mr. Gianforte’s opponent, Mike Cooney, since August 6, 2020 without reporting the expenditures as coordinated electioneering communications.

#### **B. Legal Analysis**

The available facts strongly indicate that RGA has been making unreported electioneering communications about Mr. Gianforte and his opponent Mr. Cooney and, in addition, that the Committee and RGA have been coordinating on such communications in violation of Mont. Admin. R. 44.11.605.

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<sup>1</sup> Statement of Candidate, Greg Gianforte (filed June 7, 2019), available at <https://cers-ext.mt.gov/CampaignTracker/dashboard>.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> RGA, “About,” available at <https://www.rga.org/about/>.

## **Unreported Electioneering Communication**

An electioneering communication is a paid communication that is distributed by internet website made within 60 days of the initiation of voting in an election, that does not support or oppose a candidate, that can be received by more than 100 recipients in the district voting on the candidate or ballot issue, and that refers to one or more clearly identified candidates or depicts the name, image, likeness, or voice of one or more clearly identified candidates in that election.<sup>4</sup>

As COPP made clear in its recent opinion, the costs of electioneering communications on websites made within 60 days of the initiation of voting in Montana’s general election must be reported.<sup>5</sup> In other words, all electioneering communications made since August 6, 2020 must be reported.<sup>6</sup>

RGA has made at least 13 electioneering communications that refer to either Greg Gianforte or his opponent, Mr. Cooney, that it has posted to its website or social media pages since August 6, 2020, as documented in Exhibit A. However, according to its disclosures, RGA has not reported any of these electioneering communications.

## **Coordinated Activity**

Under Montana law, coordinated activity is treated and reported as an expenditure by the person funding the activity and a contribution received by the candidate.<sup>7</sup> Coordinated activities are also subject to Montana’s contribution limits. A coordinated expenditure is any electioneering communication made by a person in cooperation with, in consultation with, under the control of, at the direction, request, or suggestion of, or with the express prior consent of a candidate or the candidate’s agent.<sup>8</sup>

RGA works directly with candidates across the country, having “decided ... to innovate and bring research, digital, rapid response and tracking programs in-house, allowing [RGA] to act quickly and take advantage of every opportunity to make a difference in [its] target races.”<sup>9</sup> For example, RGA made an in-kind contribution through a federal Super PAC, Right Direction PAC, to Montana GOP for media production and placement on August 10, 2020.<sup>10</sup> On that same day, Montana GOP released a digital advertisement about Mr. Cooney’s tax policy.<sup>11</sup> RGA retweeted Montana GOP’s advertisement from the official RGA Twitter account on the same day<sup>12</sup> and

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<sup>4</sup> See Mont. Code Ann. § 13-1-101(16).

<sup>5</sup> Foundation for Accountability and Civic Trust v. Democratic Governors Association, No. COPP 2020-CFP-036B (Oct. 16, 2020); Merwin v. Cooney, No. COPP 2020-CFP-034 (Oct. 16, 2020).

<sup>6</sup> COPP confirmed that August 6, 2020 is the beginning of the electioneering period. Foundation for Accountability and Civic Trust v. Democratic Governors Association, No. COPP 2020-CFP-036B (Oct. 16, 2020) at 8.

<sup>7</sup> Mont. Admin. Rule 44.11.602(5).

<sup>8</sup> Mont. Admin. Rule 44.11.602(1).

<sup>9</sup> RGA, “About,” available at <https://www.rga.org/about/>.

<sup>10</sup> Report of Receipts and Disbursements, RGA Right Direction PAC (filed Oct. 15, 2020), available at <https://docquery.fec.gov/cgi-bin/forms/C00490730/1450080/>.

<sup>11</sup> “MTGOP Releases Digital Ad & Document Proving Cooney Supported Sales Tax, Lied About It,” Aug. 10, 2020, available at <https://mtgop.org/mtgop-releases-digital-ad-document-proving-cooney-supported-sales-tax-lied-about-it/>.

<sup>12</sup> <https://mtgop.org/mtgop-releases-digital-ad-document-proving-cooney-supported-sales-tax-lied-about-it/>.

posted the advertisement to the official RGA Facebook the following day.<sup>13</sup>

Further, there is evidence of coordination between RGA and the Committee specifically. Both RGA and the Committee repeatedly use the same buzz words to describe Mr. Cooney within days of each other, as detailed in Exhibit B. Namely, multiple RGA press releases and multiple statements by the Committee's spokesperson refer to Gianforte's opponent as the "44-year career politician" and characterize Mr. Cooney's policies as "tax and spend."

Neither the Committee or RGA have reported the expenditures from these coordinated communications.

### **C. Conclusion**

COPP recently re-emphasized the importance of candidates and entities complying with reporting requirements for coordinated activities and electioneering communications so close to the November 3, 2020 general election.<sup>14</sup> We request an immediate investigation of the Committee and RGA's likely impermissible failure to report communications as contributions and expenditures respectively.

Sincerely,

Sandi Luckey

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<sup>13</sup>[https://www.facebook.com/GOPgovs/posts/10157843687981731?\\_\\_cft\\_\\_%5B0%5D=AZWjStbPF9b7zzH\\_GNC8E5DCf9Hu\\_fK6L8U2wYyKgv3QS9OUmlj8\\_KgqQ84ZgI\\_eKhfrvm7T9K-f6PWSfcMrI0aCVwDASF0Y6\\_SfzIajYP5wwl2HJ0ciOKb7kTse68v7Mr3lIOX0OKAs5du4tIQnzCvfsU7VfjXMSAHyK3BJLg2mf-5N4EMa8xGNRggnFuL-9o6\\_UoAujavO-QibGfLz-ljLS53laFrPQiiHqjBD4HKstFc0rEDqLgEKyrzU80KdN6s&\\_\\_tn\\_\\_=%2CO%2CP-R](https://www.facebook.com/GOPgovs/posts/10157843687981731?__cft__%5B0%5D=AZWjStbPF9b7zzH_GNC8E5DCf9Hu_fK6L8U2wYyKgv3QS9OUmlj8_KgqQ84ZgI_eKhfrvm7T9K-f6PWSfcMrI0aCVwDASF0Y6_SfzIajYP5wwl2HJ0ciOKb7kTse68v7Mr3lIOX0OKAs5du4tIQnzCvfsU7VfjXMSAHyK3BJLg2mf-5N4EMa8xGNRggnFuL-9o6_UoAujavO-QibGfLz-ljLS53laFrPQiiHqjBD4HKstFc0rEDqLgEKyrzU80KdN6s&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R)

<sup>14</sup> Foundation for Accountability and Civic Trust v. Democratic Governors Association, No. COPP 2020-CFP-036B (Oct. 16, 2020) at 7-9.

## Exhibit A

# EXHIBIT A RGA REFERENCES TO MT GOVERNOR ELECTION AUGUST 6, 2020 THROUGH OCTOBER 16, 2020

## WEBSITE

### RGA Releases New Ad In Montana Governor's Race Featuring Tax Hiker Mike Cooney In His Own Words

October 12, 2020 General Montana RGA News



WASHINGTON D.C. – RGA Right Direction PAC, an organization supported by the Republican Governors Association (RGA), today released a new television ad in the Montana governor's race featuring audio recordings of Democrat Mike Cooney pledging to raise taxes if elected governor.



The ad reminds voters of Cooney's **well-established** record of raising taxes and fees – over 100 times in his 44-year political career – and goes on to feature audio of Cooney promising to create “a new tax bracket” and raise taxes if elected governor stating Montanans “can afford to do it.” Cooney’s pledged tax hike comes in addition to his documented plan to grow the size of government – an **analysis** of his so-called economic plan by the *Bozeman Daily Chronicle* states that his proposal focuses on “creating new regulations and government offices.”

In case career politician Mike Cooney’s tax and spend record didn’t speak for itself, his own words leave Montana voters with zero doubt that he **will** continue to raise their taxes. If elected governor,” said **RGA Communications Director Amelia Chasse Alvarez**. “At a time when Montanans are already struggling to rebuild and recover, Mike Cooney, those taxing agencies would put the state’s economic comeback in jeopardy. Montana can’t afford Mike Cooney.”

#### Script for “Pay The Bills”:

We already know Mike Cooney loves to raise taxes and fees.

He’s done it over 100 times in his 44 years.

But what will he do as Governor?

Here’s Mike Cooney in his own words.

COONEY: “I would propose that we have a new tax bracket.”

COONEY: “I’m just saying let’s pay a little bit more because you can afford to do it.”

Higher taxes. It’s just the Mike Cooney way.

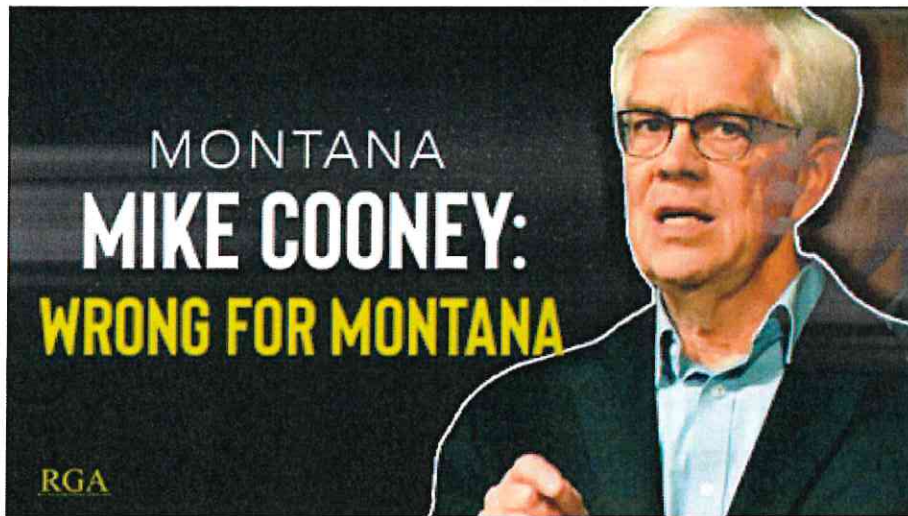
RGA Right Direction PAC is not responsible for the content of the advertising.

<https://www.rga.org/rga-releases-new-ad-montana-governors-race-featuring-tax-hiker-mike-cooney-words/>

## Exhibit A

### HE SAID IT: Mike Cooney's "Jobs Plan" Is "New Regulations And Government Offices"

October 6, 2020 | General Montana RGA News



As the Montana gubernatorial candidates prepare to meet in their final debate Tuesday evening, the contrast between their plans get Montana's workers and job creators back on their feet could not be more clear.

Despite Democrat Mike Cooney's best efforts to avoid the top issues for Montana voters, jobs and economic recovery have been front and center in the governor's race. Republican nominee Greg Gianforte released his Montana Comeback Plan in July, which provides a comprehensive roadmap to economic recovery.

Cooney took a different approach. Amid a loss of more than 27,000 jobs and over 100,000 unemployment claims filed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with workers taking home some of the lowest weekly paychecks in the country, Cooney called it "disingenuous" to suggest that Montana's economy needs a comeback. But, perhaps after consulting with his handlers, Cooney finally released an "economic plan" that only a career politician could love.

How do the two plans compare? A recent headline from the *Bazeman Daily Chronicle* reads: "Governor hopefuls differ on plans for economic recovery." That's putting it mildly.

The report goes on to describe the candidates' plans:

Gianforte's "Montana Comeback Plan" calls for reducing regulation to give businesses room to grow and to offer high-wage jobs.

While:

Cooney's "Keep Montana Working Plan" aims to improve the environment for businesses not by reducing regulation but by creating new regulations and government offices to assist businesses.

When you've been collecting a paycheck from the taxpayers since Jimmy Carter was in the White House, like Mike Cooney has, growing government and building a bigger bureaucracy is job security!

<https://www.rga.org/said-mike-cooneys-jobs-plan-new-regulations-government-offices/>

## Exhibit A

### RGAs Releases New TV Ad Featuring Career Politician Mike Cooney's New Single, "Tax, Spend, Do It Again"

September 11, 2023 General Montana RGA News



WASHINGTON, D.C. – RGA Right Direction PAC, an organization supported by the Republican Governors Association (RGA), today released a new television and digital ad in the Montana governor's race featuring the musical stylings of Democratic Lt. Governor Mike Cooney playing his favorite refrain, "Tax, Spend, Do It Again."



The ad, titled "My Thing," borrows footage from a recent campaign ad in which Cooney brags about his 44-year stint as a career politician and turns it into a musical performance guaranteed to make aging rockers and garage band dads all across the Treasure State cringe. Not included in Cooney's jam session is his track record of supporting nearly \$1 billion in higher taxes and fees and requesting a petition to create a statewide sales tax – all while collecting over \$1 million from Montana taxpayers.

"Tax, spend, do it again" is a tune that zero Montanans want to hear, but unfortunately for career politician Mike Cooney, it's his greatest hit," said RGA Communications Director **Amelia Chase Alcover**. "Raising taxes and fees, growing government, and collecting a paycheck from the taxpayers has been Mike Cooney's brand refrain for 44 years – it's time to put Montana on a new track."

#### Script for "My Thing"

MIKE COONEY: "Cause that's really my thing, right? One, two, three."  
Carve politicians Mike Cooney has been playing the same tune for 44 years.  
Tax, Spend, Do it again.  
Cooney supported almost a billion dollars in higher taxes and fees  
And a massive Montana sales tax.  
While collecting over a million dollars in taxpayer salary.  
Mike Cooney, Tax, Spend, Do it Again.  
MIKE COONEY: "Cause that's really my thing."  
RGA Right Direction PAC is responsible for the content of this advertising.

<https://www.rga.org/rga-releases-new-tv-ad-featuring-career-politician-mike-cooneys-new-single-tax-spend/>



# Exhibit A

## RGA Releases New Ad On Mike Cooney's Big Government Agenda

September 11, 2020 General Montana RGA News



WASHINGTON, D.C. – RGA Right Director PAC, an organization supported by the Republican Governors Association (RGA), released a new television ad in the Montana governor's race targeting Democratic Lt. Governor Mike Cooney's history of supporting policies that grow the size of government and raise taxes, including the big government agenda he promises to implement as governor.



The ad titled "Big Government," highlights Cooney's campaign proposals to grow government and increase spending – plans he has openly stated would require tax hikes to pay for them. Cooney has a history of pushing higher taxes and opposing tax cuts throughout his 44 years in government – as a state senator he **requested** legislation for a statewide sales tax, and when Montana had a \$1 billion surplus, Cooney **stated** his opposition to returning those dollars to Montanans in the form of tax cuts and pushed to spend the funds on big government programs.

"Just like a career politician who's never had to get a real job, Mike Cooney thinks government is the answer to every problem and raising taxes is always the solution," said **RGA Communications Director Amelia Chassé Alcover**. "Cooney has pushed for more spending and opposed tax relief for Montana working families for 44 years and now he wants to raise Montanans' taxes to pay for his liberal agenda. Montana can't afford Mike Cooney."

### Script for "Big Government":

Why are Mike Cooney and his liberal allies spending millions to attack Greg Gianforte?

Because career politician Mike Cooney can't hide his big government plans.

Cooney wants to grow government instead of tax cuts.

And supports a government takeover of healthcare.

He's all about bigger government.

And a massive Montana sales tax – that would be a disaster.

Forty-four years of Mike Cooney – is enough. More than enough.

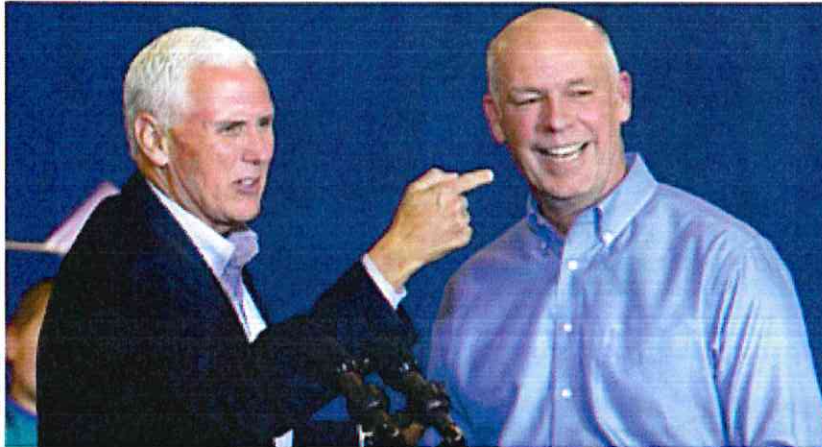
RGA Right Director PAC is responsible for the cost of this advertising.

<https://www.rga.org/rga-releases-new-ad-mike-cooneys-big-government-agenda/>

## Exhibit A

### Vice President Mike Pence: Greg Gianforte Is The Law And Order Governor Montana Needs

September 15, 2020 | [General Montana RGA News](#)



In a string **campaign event** in Belgrade, Montana, Vice President Mike Pence made it crystal clear that Montanans need a reprieve from the failed Bullock-Cooney administration and offered a full-throated endorsement of Greg Gianforte for governor.



Vice President Mike Pence: "That's why we need a strong governor in Montana, who will stand for law and order. That's why we need Greg Gianforte."

During the Trump administration's unswerving support for the men and women of law enforcement and strong opposition to radical Democratic-led movements to defund the police, Vice President Pence stressed the importance of electing leaders who support law enforcement and will keep communities safe. In Greg Gianforte, Montanans will have that leader.

While Greg Gianforte unequivocally **condemns** efforts to undermine law enforcement, liberal Mike Cooney is **touting** an **endorsement** from a group that openly supports defunding the police.

<https://www.rga.org/vice-president-mike-pence-greg-gianforte-law-order-governor-montana-needs/>

# Exhibit A

## New RGA Ad Features Montanans Explaining Why They Can't Afford Mike Cooney

WASHINGTON, D.C. | General Montana RGA News



WASHINGTON, D.C. – RGA Right Director RWC, an organization supported by the Republican Governors Association (RGA), released its latest television and digital ad in the Montana governor's race. The ad titled "We Can't" features Montanans debating Democratic Governor Mike Cooney's record of support for tax and fee hikes on everyday items and stating that Montana simply can't afford Cooney's tax and spend agenda.



Over 44 years ago, just like you, Cooney has supported over 1000 million individuals and families, including taxes on fees on fishing and hunting licenses, vehicle registration, hospital and nursing homes, and water. As a state senator, Cooney requested legislation for a 4% statewide sales tax in 2004 and voted for local option sales tax legislation in 2005 and 2007.

As the backbone of Montana joins together to rebuild the economy, rebuild their small businesses, and restore financial security to taxpayers, Montanans are tired of Mike Cooney's record of putting Montana's recovery in serious jeopardy," said RGA Communications Director **Amelia Chase Fowler**. "Rising taxes and fees on taxes that working families rely on is the polar opposite of what Montana needs now at this critical time. Montana just can't afford Mike Cooney."

### Script for "We Can't"

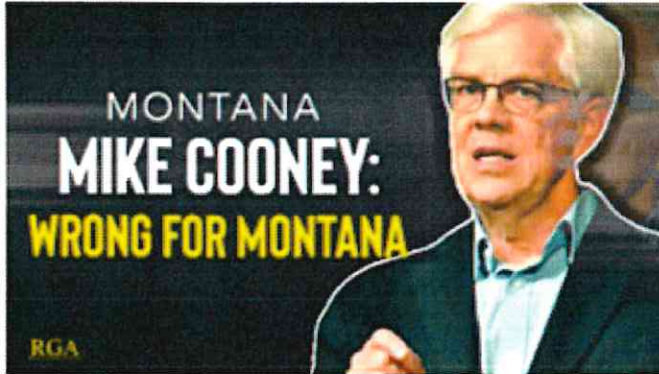
Forty-four years ago, just like you,  
Mike Cooney supported  
over a million people like  
you. That would be his record for  
you.  
And you?  
Cooney's record says that he's  
putting everything  
on you.  
Fishing, hunting,  
health care,  
cars,  
rent, water.  
Do you say water?  
Just a little bit in a year, it's  
not about Mike Cooney.  
It's about Mike Cooney.  
Montana just can't afford Mike Cooney.  
No way.  
RGA Right Director RWC is responsible for the content of this advertising.

<https://www.rga.org/new-rga-ad-features-montanans-explaining-cant-afford-mike-cooney/>

# Exhibit A

## ICYMI: Leading Montana Political Experts Expose Mike Cooney's Shameless Spin On Sales Tax Support

August 14, 2020 General Montana RGA News



Several members of Mike Cooney's party to not have the support for a statewide sales tax in Montana but he's making a spin that he and his spin is getting exposed by the experts for exactly what it is. Following is the transcript of the video from a career politician.

In the 44-year-long political career, Cooney has established himself as the savior of Montana, supporting over \$150 million in state tax and fee increases. That **same** in everything from water and parks to hospitals and housing. And despite his efforts to hoodwink the people of Big Sky County, Cooney's record shows he supported a statewide sales tax. Not only did Cooney endorse the sales tax in 2002, he tried to become the father of a Montana sales tax when he **requested** that legislators raise a 4% tax in 2004.

In the most recent episode of Cooney's Beat on Montana Public Radio, top reporters and political analysts took Cooney to task for misleading voters about the real cost of support of a sales tax.



**Sally Hawk, Senior News Analyst, Montana Public Radio:** But Cooney says he only requested a sales tax but why? He never introduced because he wanted to research the impact of such a tax. And that doesn't give us much to do. He didn't need to draft a bill to get that information for the thing.

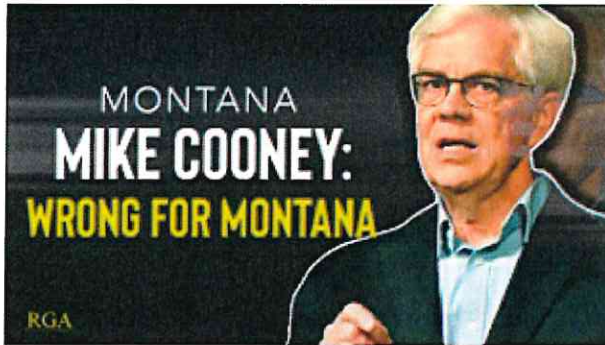
**Rod Sisson, Professor Of Political Science, University Of Montana:** I think it was pretty bad. So he played out over several months in 2004 and 2005. And Cooney had a sales tax bill drafted when he was in the legislature. Now he's claiming that he only had the bill drafted as a way to get a revenue note, which is an analysis from the Department of Revenue. And he wanted to see the effects of a sales tax that was in a legislative bill. But that doesn't make a whole lot of sense. Just for starters, he's saying that he's already been against a sales tax. And if that's true, why would you request a bill draft for something you're adamantly opposed to? The way that he was just going to get more information about a deposit on it, but he could have gotten that information from other sources. He could have looked at the revenue note of the Department of Revenue. Or he could have just requested it without drafting a bill. So it seems pretty odd that you'd decide to go through the laborious process of drafting a bill in an attempt to get that information. And the other reality here is that the analysis he was seeking typically isn't done until after the bill is introduced. So if you draft a bill and don't introduce it, you don't get the analysis that supposedly motivated the draft in the first place. So that is a weird strategy. The other explanation here that we could imagine is that Cooney, you know, at the very least, played with the idea of a sales tax.

<https://www.rga.org/icymi-leading-montana-political-experts-expose-mike-cooneys-shameless-spin-sales-tax-support/>

# Exhibit A

## RGA Releases New Ad In Montana Governor's Race On Mike Cooney's Dangerous Tax Record

November 17, 2020 | General Montana RGA News



RGA Right Reason PAC, an organization supported by the Republican Governors Association (RGA), today released a new television and digital advertising Democratic Gov. Mike Cooney's troubling record on taxes and how Montana families and small businesses are struggling to make ends meet.



The ad, which will run on statewide television as well as digital platforms, critic Cooney's support for higher taxes on nursing homes and hospitals, as well as his documented attempt to create a statewide sales tax during his tenure in the Montana State Senate. Cooney voted for legislation to raise the existing hotel tax in 2015, as well as legislation to extend the transportation infrastructure bond.

In 2004, Cooney requested drafting a plan to enact a "highest sales tax and use tax on the retail sale of goods." Four percent is the highest sales tax allowable under the Montana Constitution. Cooney's support for a sales tax on restaurants in a 2002 interview with the independent Pacific prior to beginning his first term in the senate. Cooney suggested that new taxes "could come from a targeted sales tax to a tax on medical providers," and he voted for local option sales tax legislation in 2009 and 2017. An analysis of data from the Montana Department of Revenue and the U.S. Census Bureau indicates that the average Montana household would pay an additional \$1,400 per year under a 4% sales tax.

"It's easy to see why Mike Cooney is desperately trying to railroad Montana voters about his tax-hungry record – his irresponsible agenda would be downright dangerous for families, small businesses and seniors facing economic and healthcare challenges of their own here," said RGA Communications Director **Araya Chaudhri**. "With poor Montanaers have to be asking, 'Is there anything Mike Cooney won't tax?'"

### Script for "Dangerous"

It's just dangerous.

Mike Cooney voted for higher taxes on nursing homes.

For higher costs on hospitals.

And Mike Cooney tried to create a massive Montana sales tax.

A sales tax could have taken nearly \$1,400 out of your pocket a year.

The costs are rough and heavy. Mike Cooney is just voting on taxes.

RGA Right Reason PAC is responsible for the content of this advertising.

<https://www.rga.org/icymi-leading-montana-political-experts-expose-mike-cooneys-shameless-spin-sales-tax-support/>

## TWITTER

Exhibit A

**RGA** The RGA  @The\_RGA · Oct 13  
Liberal tax hiker @CooneyforMT  
in his own words:

"I would propose that we have a new tax bracket"

"I'm just saying let's pay a little bit more because you can afford to do it"



Higher taxes. It's just the Mike Cooney way.

[rga.org/rga-releases-n...](https://rga.org/rga-releases-n...) #mtgov #mtpol

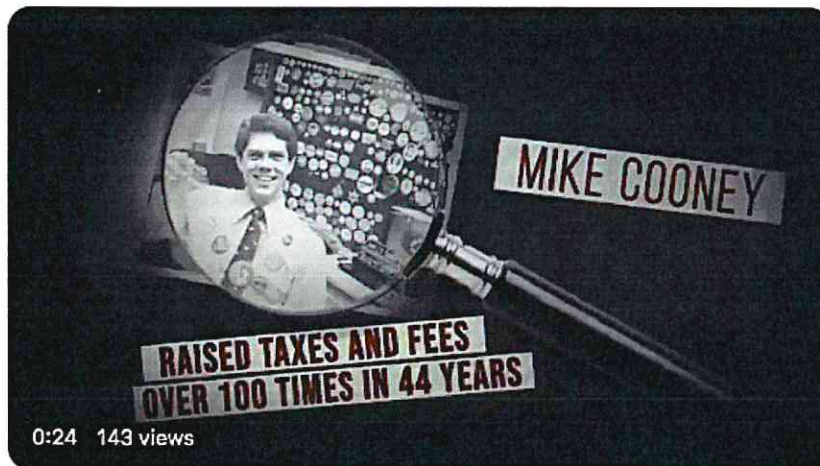


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[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1316061141475323904?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1316061141475323904?s=20)

**RGA** The RGA  @The\_RGA · Oct 13  
 RGA Releases New Ad In Montana Governor's Race Featuring Tax  
Hiker Mike Cooney In His Own Words



[rga.org/rga-releases-n...](https://rga.org/rga-releases-n...) #mtgov



  1  2 

Exhibit A

[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1316033384892772352?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1316033384892772352?s=20)

**RGA** The RGA  @The\_RGA · Oct 6 

While [@GregForMontana](#) has been fighting for Montana energy jobs, [@CooneyforMT](#) was fundraising with extreme Green New Dealer [@JayInslee](#).



Their plan will kill Montana jobs and make energy unaffordable for working families.

Montana can't afford Mike Cooney. [#mtgovdebate](#) [#mtpol](#)



 5  15  14 

[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1313659494619021312?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1313659494619021312?s=20)

**RGA** The RGA  @The\_RGA · Oct 6 

WATCH: [@GregForMontana](#) pledges to donate his entire salary to charity when he's elected as Montana's next governor! [#mtgovdebate](#) [#mtpol](#)



 1  7  14 

[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1313650435501195264?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1313650435501195264?s=20)

Exhibit A

**RGA** **The RGA** ✓ @The\_RGA · Oct 6  
.@GregForMontana's Montana Comeback Plan will help job creators and workers recover, rebuild, and come back stronger than ever!

Read it at [montanabusinessplan.com](http://montanabusinessplan.com)



Greg Gianforte's Comeback Plan  
[youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

1 5 4

[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1313648096614797313?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1313648096614797313?s=20)

**RGA** **The RGA** ✓ @The\_RGA · Oct 6  
HE SAID IT: Mike Cooney's "Jobs Plan" Is "New Regulations And Government Offices"

[rga.org/said-mike-coon...](http://rga.org/said-mike-coon...) #mtgov #mtpol



Cooney's "Keep Montana Working Plan" aims to improve the environment for businesses not by reducing regulation but by creating new regulations and government offices to assist businesses.

2

[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1313610566846603267?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1313610566846603267?s=20)



Exhibit A

**RGA** The RGA  @The\_RGA · Oct 4   
WATCH: @GregForMontana completely eviscerates @CooneyforMT's failed record, including:



- ✗ 44th in the nation for wages
- ✗ last in the country for starting teacher pay
- ✗ 2nd highest number of children in foster care

Montana needs a comeback. #mtgov #mtpol #mtgovdebate



 4  9  12 

[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1312742183502520320?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1312742183502520320?s=20)

**RGA** The RGA  @The\_RGA · Oct 3   
The choice for governor is clear.

If you want higher taxes and more government, vote @CooneyforMT.

If you want lower taxes, more jobs, and no sales tax, vote @GregForMontana.

#mtgov #mtpol

 2  4  5 

[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1312557111797313536?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1312557111797313536?s=20)

Exhibit A

**RGA** **The RGA**  @The\_RGA · Oct 3 ▼

**.@CooneyforMT** is focused on his next job.

**@GregForMontana** is focused on creating jobs and opportunities for Montanans.

That's the choice in this election.

[#mtgov](#) [#mtpol](#)

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[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1312555373493133312?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1312555373493133312?s=20)

**RGA** **The RGA**  @The\_RGA · Oct 3 ▼

Top Montana political reporters on **@CooneyforMT**'s sales tax lie:

"doesn't pass my smell test"

"it looks pretty bad"

"doesn't make a whole lot of sense"

**"Cooney, you know, at the very least, toyed with the idea of a sales tax..."**

[rga.org/icymi-leading-...](#) [#mtgov](#) [#mtpol](#)




ICYMI: Leading Montana Political Experts Expose M...  
Liberal Democrat Mike Cooney can try to run from his support for a statewide sales tax in Montana bu...  
[rga.org](#)

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[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1312550844647329792?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1312550844647329792?s=20)

Exhibit A

**RGA** The RGA  @The\_RGA · Oct 3  
150,000 Montanans out of work under @CooneyforMT.

What's his plan? He has none.

"Lt. Gov. Mike **Cooney** said it's disingenuous to say Montana's economy needs a comeback..."

[ypradio.org/government-pol...](https://ypradio.org/government-pol...) #mtgov #mtpol



**Gianforte Releases "Montana Comeback Plan"**

This week, Montana's Republican candidate for governor unveiled what he's billing a comeback plan for the state.

[ypradio.org](https://ypradio.org)



[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1312546510215806976?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1312546510215806976?s=20)

Exhibit A

**RGA** **The RGA**  @The\_RGA · Oct 3 ▼

**.@GregForMontana** has a comprehensive plan to lead Montana's comeback and build an even brighter future for working families.

Read the Montana Comeback Plan => [montanabusinessplan.com](http://montanabusinessplan.com) #mtgov #mtpol




**Montana Business Plan - Greg Gianforte**  
We're building a business plan for Montana, and we want to hear your ideas about how to improve Montana's business climate & make stat...  
[montanabusinessplan.com](http://montanabusinessplan.com)

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[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1312545252348231680?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1312545252348231680?s=20)

Exhibit A



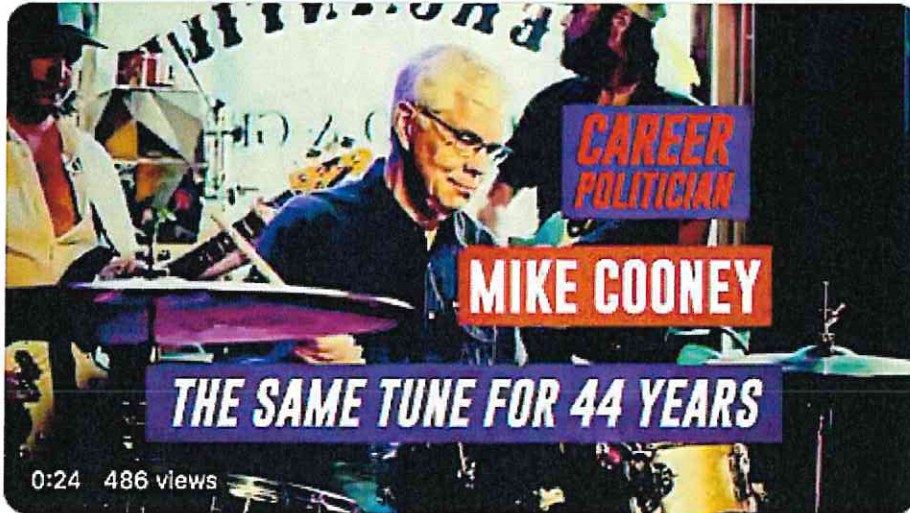
The RGA  @The\_RGA · Sep 30

Career politician Mike **Cooney** has been singing the same tune for 44 years:

Tax. Spend. Do It Again.

Time to put Montana on a new track.

[rga.org/rga-releases-n...](https://rga.org/rga-releases-n...) #mtgov #mtpol



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[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1311397805894889472?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1311397805894889472?s=20)

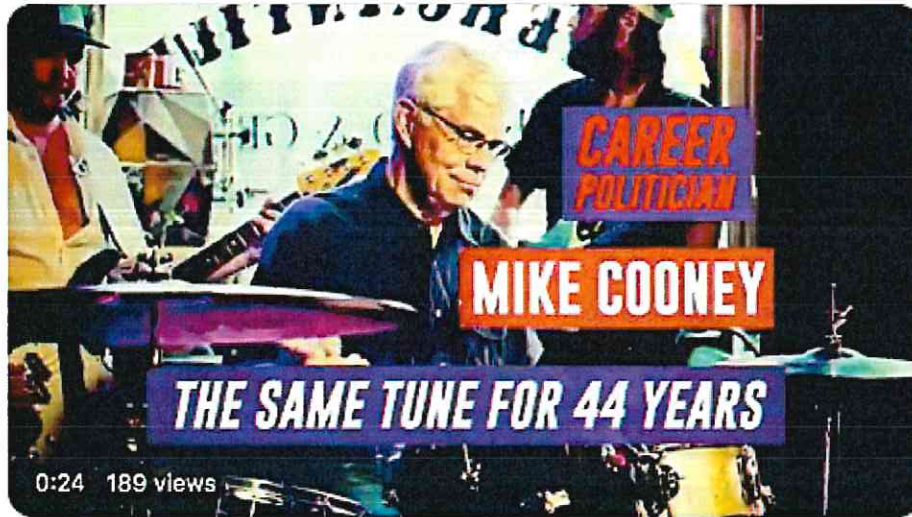
Exhibit A



The RGA @The\_RGA · Sep 30  
Tax. Spend. Do It Again.

That's Mike **Cooney's** thing.

[rga.org/rga-releases-n...](https://rga.org/rga-releases-n...) #mtgov #mtpol



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[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1311308568134668289?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1311308568134668289?s=20)



The RGA @The\_RGA · Sep 30  
 **NEW:** RGA Releases New TV Ad Featuring Career Politician Mike **Cooney's** New Single, "Tax, Spend, Do It Again"

[rga.org/rga-releases-n...](https://rga.org/rga-releases-n...) #mtgov #mtpol

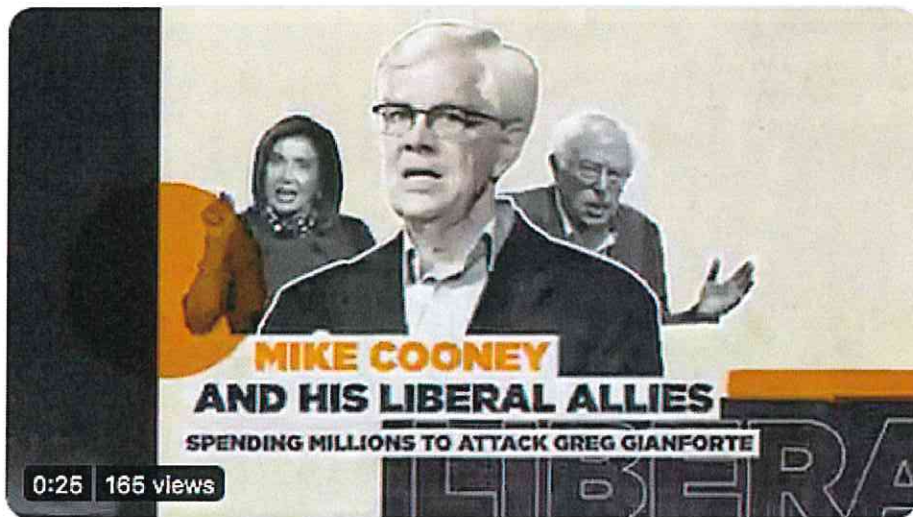



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Exhibit A

[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1311300839210975233?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1311300839210975233?s=20)

**RGA** The RGA  @The\_RGA · Sep 18  
44 years of career politician Mike **Cooney's** big government agenda is enough. #mtgov #mtpol




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[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1307018846486790144?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1307018846486790144?s=20)


**RGA** The RGA  @The\_RGA · Sep 18  
 RGA Releases New Ad On Mike **Cooney's** Big Government Agenda  
[rga.org/rga-releases-n...](https://rga.org/rga-releases-n...) #mtgov #mtpol



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Exhibit A


**RGA** The RGA  @The\_RGA · Sep 15 ▼  
VP @Mike\_Pence: "We need a strong governor in Montana, who will stand for law and order. That's why we need Greg Gianforte."

[rga.org/vice-president...](https://rga.org/vice-president...) #mtgov #mtpol



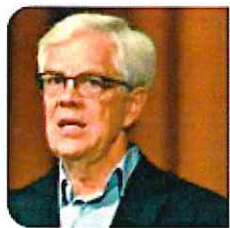
 7  14  25 

[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1305988860351049729?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1305988860351049729?s=20)

**RGA** The RGA  @The\_RGA · Sep 6 ▼  
ICYMI: ANOTHER ethics complaint filed against @CooneyforMT

@factdc is calling on authorities "to seek investigation into Lt. Governor Mike Cooney...and the Democratic Governors Association (DGA) for prohibited coordinated communications."

[factdc.org/post/ethics-wa...](https://factdc.org/post/ethics-wa...) #mtgov #mtpol



Ethics Watchdog Calls for Probe into Lt. Governor,...  
Evidence Indicates Cooney and the DGA Engaged in Prohibited Coordinated Communication. ...  
[factdc.org](https://factdc.org)

  4  1 

[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1302589248009314305?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1302589248009314305?s=20)



Exhibit A

**RGA** The RGA  @The\_RGA · Sep 1

I can't afford Mike **Cooney**.

We can't afford Mike **Cooney**.

Montana just can't afford Mike **Cooney**.

No way.

[rga.org/new-rga-ad-fea...](https://rga.org/new-rga-ad-fea...) #mtgov #mtpol



  4  

[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1300845622153678848?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1300845622153678848?s=20)

Exhibit A


**RGA** The RGA  @The\_RGA · Sep 1  
NEW RGA Ad Features Montanans Explaining Why They Can't Afford Mike Cooney

[rga.org/new-rga-ad-fea...](https://rga.org/new-rga-ad-fea...) #mtgov #mtpol



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[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1300787130143252480?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1300787130143252480?s=20)

**RGA** The RGA  @The\_RGA · Aug 18  
ICYMI: Leading Montana Political Experts Expose Mike Cooney's Shameless Spin On Sales Tax Support

[rga.org/icymi-leading-...](https://rga.org/icymi-leading-...) #mtgov #mtpol



2 2 2

[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1295725745562583040?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1295725745562583040?s=20)

Exhibit A

**RGA** **The RGA** @The\_RGA · Aug 17  
Mike **Cooney** voted for higher taxes on nursing homes, hospitals & he tried to create a massive sales tax.

He requested a bill for a 4% sales tax that could have cost nearly \$1,400 per household every year.

Times are tough and Mike **Cooney** is just wrong on taxes. #mtgov #mtpol





4 1

[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1295452349453000705?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1295452349453000705?s=20)

Exhibit A



The RGA  @The\_RGA · Aug 17

 NEW: RGA Releases New Ad In Montana Governor's Race On Mike Cooney's Dangerous Tax Record


[rga.org/rga-releases-n...](https://rga.org/rga-releases-n...) #mtgov #mtpol



[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1295375858690129920?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1295375858690129920?s=20)

Exhibit A

**RGA**

**The RGA**  @The\_RGA · Aug 10

**MUST WATCH:** On top of pushing nearly \$1 billion in higher taxes and fees, career politician Mike **Cooney** requested a bill to impose the maximum sales tax on Montanans.

It's time for Mike **Cooney** to come clean about his sales tax support.  
[#mtgov](#) [#mtpol](#)



**Montana Republican Party**  @MTGOP · Aug 10

Not only did career politician Mike Cooney support a sales tax for hardworking Montanans – he tried again, and again, and again to make it the law of the land, and now he's lying to MT voters about it. Montana can't afford Mike Cooney [#mtgov](#) [#mtpol](#)



[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1292870373709615104?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1292870373709615104?s=20)

Exhibit A

**RGA**

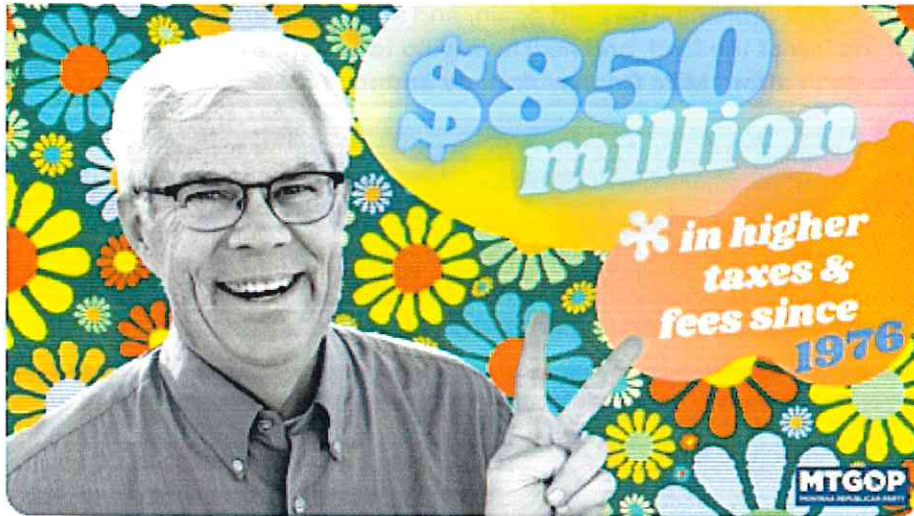
**The RGA** ✓ @The\_RGA · Aug 7

Mike Cooney thinks taxes and fees are groovy but hardworking Montana taxpayers sure don't! #mtgov #mtpol

**Montana Republican Party** ✓ @MTGOP · Aug 7

Since 1976, career politician @CooneyforMT has voted to raise taxes & fees on hardworking Montanans by a whopping \$850 MILLION.

Not groovy, Mike! #mtgov #mtpol



[https://twitter.com/The\\_RGA/status/1291761792360820739?s=20](https://twitter.com/The_RGA/status/1291761792360820739?s=20)

**FACEBOOK**

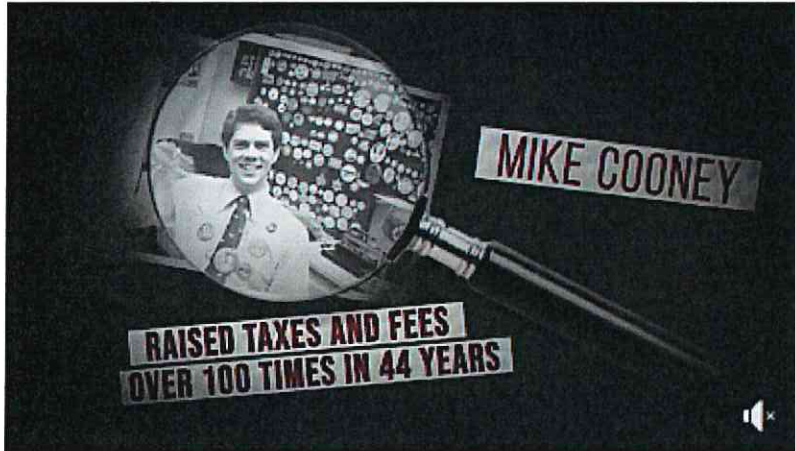
Exhibit A

**RGA** Republican Governors Association (RGA) ✓  
October 14 at 4:00 PM · 🌐

Everyone knows that liberal Mike Cooney has raised taxes and fees on hardworking Montanans by almost \$1 billion, but what would he do if elected governor?

Here's Cooney in his own words:

"I would propose that we have a new tax bracket"... See More



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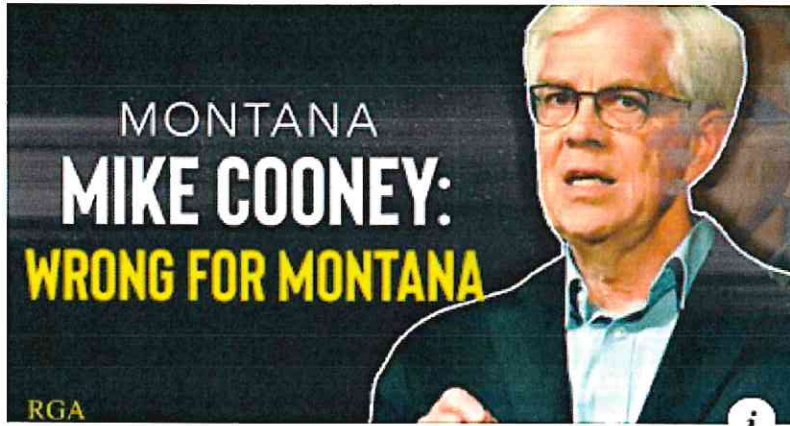
Exhibit A

**RGA** Republican Governors Association (RGA)  October 7 at 11:53 AM ·  ...

You won't BELIEVE this.

Liberal career politician Mike Cooney finally released his "jobs plan" for Montana, and it calls for..."creating new regulations and government offices."

With 44 years getting a paycheck on the taxpayer dime, it's not surprising that Mike Cooney thinks more government is the only answer.... See More



RGA.ORG

**HE SAID IT: Mike Cooney's "Jobs Plan" Is "New Regulations And Government Offices"**

  11

1 Comment

[https://www.facebook.com/GOPgovs/posts/10157983886596731?\\_cft\\_\[0\]=AZWWW7zeWgPG0jh5JKOA-y1MFd66pWaa7hGOa0IYEQEcKUA1nJOR0iQi9K7fu4dgUG4VRBTIOg6p5zycNr4shUv4gOthuL6mqwj\\_0Owjte-Sl9vw8WbCORs9vex-b9ZnYPQA9uQ2nbqANW2xgPXFNtFYLI6E4IFb18TQ6xA8kMohe43ZrxzIKdDQeA-pbvqF6mI&\\_tn\\_=%2CO%2CP-R](https://www.facebook.com/GOPgovs/posts/10157983886596731?_cft_[0]=AZWWW7zeWgPG0jh5JKOA-y1MFd66pWaa7hGOa0IYEQEcKUA1nJOR0iQi9K7fu4dgUG4VRBTIOg6p5zycNr4shUv4gOthuL6mqwj_0Owjte-Sl9vw8WbCORs9vex-b9ZnYPQA9uQ2nbqANW2xgPXFNtFYLI6E4IFb18TQ6xA8kMohe43ZrxzIKdDQeA-pbvqF6mI&_tn_=%2CO%2CP-R)



Exhibit A

**RGA** Republican Governors Association (RGA)  

WATCH [Greg Gianforte](#) completely eviscerate liberal Democrat Mike Cooney's failed record, including:

- ✗ 44th in the nation for wages
- ✗ Last in the country for starting teacher pay... See More



   15

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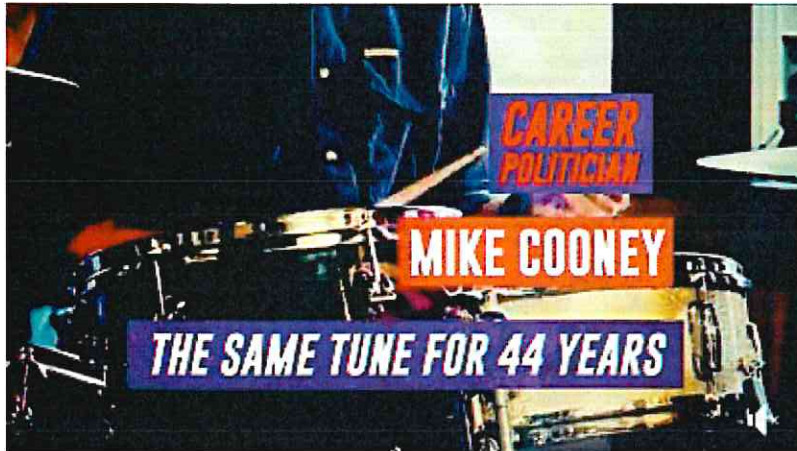
[https://www.facebook.com/GOPgovs/posts/10157979498956731?\\_cft\\_\\_\[0\]=AZX006N1qXxjJ8S\\_2AOzD63emCDDxdx9L9WCtPZlOz4juUjceQ24boTj0Wx61-qBs8EXRNRr9XRx4\\_t6u8pUGPAvHJ6HpN0W1NImTkZup3pbkVpxbfDyXrSFIOX4I22veqWnCOVQfb7ZjQTZ7AioOdiiLn4dS8w\\_zHyzgJDrzJQluiMvqrlny1MHif1ENygPYcE\\_fFr9Rkw\\_Xn93Bw7axIeC&\\_tn=%2CO%2CP-R](https://www.facebook.com/GOPgovs/posts/10157979498956731?_cft__[0]=AZX006N1qXxjJ8S_2AOzD63emCDDxdx9L9WCtPZlOz4juUjceQ24boTj0Wx61-qBs8EXRNRr9XRx4_t6u8pUGPAvHJ6HpN0W1NImTkZup3pbkVpxbfDyXrSFIOX4I22veqWnCOVQfb7ZjQTZ7AioOdiiLn4dS8w_zHyzgJDrzJQluiMvqrlny1MHif1ENygPYcE_fFr9Rkw_Xn93Bw7axIeC&_tn=%2CO%2CP-R)

Exhibit A

**RGA** Republican Governors Association (RGA)    
September 30 at 4:13 PM · 

Career politician Mike Cooney has been playing the same tune for 44 years: Tax. Spend. Do It Again.

Montana needs a Republican governor to grow jobs and put the state on a new track.





  18

2 Shares

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Exhibit A

**RGA** Republican Governors Association (RGA)  September 1 ·  ...

The RGA's latest ad in the Montana governor's race titled features Montanans detailing Democrat Mike Cooney's record of support for tax and fee hikes on everyday items, like fishing and hunting licenses, vehicle registration, hospitals and nursing homes, and even water.

The bottom line: Montana simply can't afford Cooney's tax-and-spend agenda.





  16

1 Comment 2 Shares

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Exhibit A

**RGA** Republican Governors Association (RGA)  August 18 ·  ...

"That doesn't pass my smell test..."  
"It looks pretty bad..."  
"That doesn't make a whole lot of sense..."... [See More](#)






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**MTPR's Campaign Beat, 7/17/2020**

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## Exhibit A

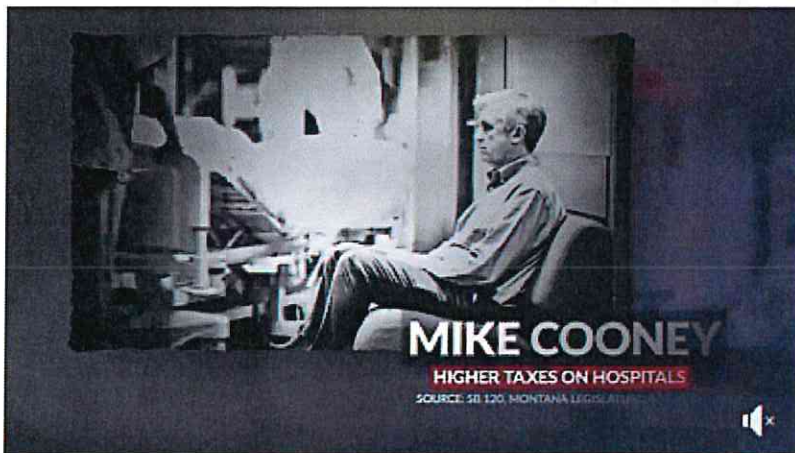
**RGA** Republican Governors Association (RGA)  

August 17 · 

Montana Democrat Mike Cooney voted for higher taxes on nursing homes, hospitals, and he even tried to create a massive sales tax that could have cost working families nearly \$1,400 per household every year.

It's easy to see why he's desperately trying to mislead Montana voters about his tax-hiking record – his irresponsible agenda would be downright dangerous for families, small businesses, and seniors facing economic and healthcare challenges at this critical time.

At this point Montanans have to be asking: Is there anything Mike Cooney won't tax?



 9

5 Shares

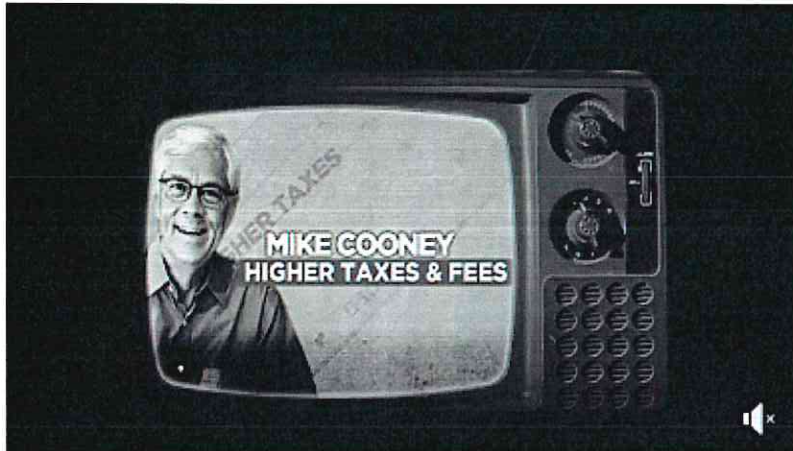
[https://www.facebook.com/GOPgovs/posts/10157859497121731?\\_cft\\_\\_\[0\]=AZV9eX1SbQ1vYs4ikdNIJtydy0EygThZO9LDRuQObHQOYB4JEYaJpz2A52xhExhVIJjg4xBUUEr5J8cuuG7i1sZ4JWuzUG7-RDgc5lXnrBqDmhfoZx300tL6JIGAwDwMejzAVu4nnrnoZmD4qi9YwM1b9AW3SIVte8QrZDPawqXLIBLVf99qKUo-SE8Ui9WcvP1kve2oLequm1Cp12Tk\\_9d&\\_tn=%20CO%20CP-R](https://www.facebook.com/GOPgovs/posts/10157859497121731?_cft__[0]=AZV9eX1SbQ1vYs4ikdNIJtydy0EygThZO9LDRuQObHQOYB4JEYaJpz2A52xhExhVIJjg4xBUUEr5J8cuuG7i1sZ4JWuzUG7-RDgc5lXnrBqDmhfoZx300tL6JIGAwDwMejzAVu4nnrnoZmD4qi9YwM1b9AW3SIVte8QrZDPawqXLIBLVf99qKUo-SE8Ui9WcvP1kve2oLequm1Cp12Tk_9d&_tn=%20CO%20CP-R)

Exhibit A

**RGA** Republican Governors Association (RGA) ✓ August 11 · 🌐 ...

Career politician Mike Cooney is trying to mislead Montana voters on his record of supporting a sales tax, but numbers don't lie - Cooney never met a tax he didn't like.

Watch the video below to get the facts:



**Montana Republican Party** ✓

August 10 · 🌐

Not only did career politician [Mike Cooney for Governor](#) support a sales tax for hardworking Montanans – he tried again, and again, and again to make it the law ... [See More](#)

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## Exhibit A

### EXHIBIT B RGA AND GREG FOR MONTANA SPOKESPERSON USE THE SAME SLOGANS TO REFER TO GIANFORTE'S OPPONENT AUGUST 6, 2020 THROUGH OCTOBER 16, 2020

“44-year career politician”

RGA

- **Sept. 18** - RGA spokesman Amelia Chassé Alcivar: “Cooney has pushed for more spending and opposed tax relief for Montana working families for 44 years” [RGA, Press Release, 9/18/20]
- **Aug. 4** - RGA spokesman Amelia Chassé Alcivar: “In 44 years, Mike Cooney has made more than a million dollars off of Montana taxpayers” [RGA, Press Release, 8/4/20]
- **Aug. 2** - RGA spokesman Amelia Chassé Alcivar: “Mike Cooney has had 44 years to improve Montana's economy.” [Washington Examiner, [8/2/20](#)]
- **July 7** - RGA spokesman Amelia Chassé Alcivar: “44 years is enough” [RGA, Press Release, 7/7/20]
- **June 3** - RGA spokesman Amelia Chassé Alcivar: “Montanans deserve a leader who knows how to create jobs and get people back to work, not a career politician like Mike Cooney who has been failing to deliver for 44 years” [RGA, Press Release, 6/3/20]
- **June 22** - “Now there's a convenient way to catch up with Cooney's 44 years of liberalism, tax hikes, and ethics challenges” [Twitter, [@ameliachasse, 6/22/20](#)]

Greg for Montana

- **Aug. 14** - Gianforte spokesman Travis Hall: “Something a 44-year career politician tweets despite a long history of supporting hundreds of millions of dollars in higher taxes and fees.” [Twitter, [@traviswhall, 8/14/20](#)]
- **Aug. 12** - Gianforte spokesman Travis Hall: “44-year career politician Mike Cooney has supported imposing hundreds of millions of dollars in higher taxes on hardworking Montanans” [Twitter, [@traviswhall, 8/12/20](#)]
- **Aug. 11** - Gianforte spokesman Travis Hall: “The fact is 44-year career politician Mike Cooney worked on imposing a 4% sales tax on hardworking Montanans” [Great Falls Tribune, 8/11/20]
- **Aug. 10** - Gianforte spokesman Travis Hall: “The fact is 44-year career politician Mike Cooney worked on imposing a 4 percent sales tax” [Twitter, [@traviswhall, 8/10/20](#)]
- **July 16** - Gianforte spokesman Travis Hall: “of course 44-year career politician Mike Cooney is lying about Greg Gianforte's record” [Great Falls Tribune, 7/16/20]
- **June 19** - “Mike Cooney's a 40-year career politician who would know that, right?” [Twitter, [@traviswhall, 6/19/20](#)]

“Tax & spend”

RGA

- **Oct. 2** - RGA spokesman Amelia Chassé Alcivar: “In case career politician Mike Cooney's tax-and-spend record didn't speak for itself” [RGA, Press Release, 10/12/20]
- **Sept. 20** - RGA spokesman Amelia Chassé Alcivar: “Tax, spend, do it again' is a tune that zero Montanans want to hear, but unfortunately for career politician Mike Cooney, it's his greatest hit” [RGA, Press Release, 9/30/20]

## Exhibit A

- **Aug. 4** - RGA spokesman Amelia Chassé Alcivar: “Mike Cooney's liberal tax-and-spend agenda would be wrong for Montana in the best of times” [RGA, Press Release, 8/4/20]
- **July 7** - RGA spokesman Amelia Chassé Alcivar: “Mike Cooney has completely lost touch with the real-world impact his tax-and-spend policies have on working Montana families” [RGA, Press Release, 7/7/20]

Greg for Montana

- **Oct 1** - Gianforte spokesman Travis Hall: “The real answer? Higher taxes. Drum Tax Drum Spend Drum Drum Do It Again Drum” [Twitter, @traviswhall, [10/1/20](#)]
- **Sept 30** - Gianforte spokesman Travis Hall: “He wrote a bill for the MAXIMUM possible sales tax. Drum Tax Drum Spend Drum Drum Do It Again Drum” [Twitter, @traviswhall, [9/30/20](#)]
- **Sept 30** - Gianforte spokesman Travis Hall: “Tax. Spend. Do It Again.” [Twitter, @traviswhall, [9/30/20](#)]