

I've got a state budget in place, income tax cuts in effect and a sales tax rebate on the way next month, so guess what? It's time to get to work on fundamental tax reform—and, as usual, my administration is *not* starting with business as usual.

Here's the way it's almost always been done before: governors appoint a blue-ribbon panel of experts to a "tax study commission", and then they go out and produce a thick book of recommendations that almost nobody reads and the legislature mostly ignores.

This time, we're starting with ordinary citizens to ask THEM what we can do to reform the tax system--starting with the property tax. How much should we rely on the property tax in the first place? And can we somehow make the property tax work ?

I want to hear from citizens--not just the experts and the special interests and government bureaucrats-- about these issues. As a start, early next month (August 2 - 6) we're going to bring together 18 ordinary citizens from all across Minnesota in a "citizens' jury" on the property tax. They'll spend an entire week hearing from the experts, asking questions and cross examining them, and at the end they'll make THEIR recommendations for tax reform.

And I will personally talk with them about what they came up with.

We have to bring government back to the people, and invite real people--not just lobbyists and special interest groups--to participate and improve things. Our broken down property tax system is one great place to start.

Stay tuned to Lunch With the Governor for more on the Citizens Jury—we'll give you more details next week.