

37,000 Fake AI Comments Mysteriously Oppose Washington State's Effort To Tax The Rich

from the *the-death-of-informed-consensus* dept
Tue, Mar 10th 2026 03:21pm - **Karl Bode**

Ideally, the U.S. public is supposed to be able to comment on government policy proceedings, and the government is supposed to listen to that input.

Of course, it doesn't really work that way: For years we've noted how U.S. regulatory comment proceedings are **full of bots and fake comments from industries trying to game regulators**, and make shitty policy (giant mergers, mindless deregulation, the elimination of consumer protection) **seem** like it has broad public support (remember when **dead people opposed net neutrality?**)

Unsurprisingly the U.S. hasn't done anything to seriously rein in this problem. And when officials do act, it tends to be **largely toothless**, resulting in the problem getting steadily worse.

And that was **before** AI made it significantly easier for bad actors to quickly automate this sort of gamesmanship. Washington State has been exploring the **RADICAL SOCIALIST ANTIFA EXTREMIST** idea of **having the state's rich actually pay their taxes**. That's not been received particularly well by the extraction class, which has been **making empty promises about leaving the state**.

Recently the state opened up the public comment system to input, and not too surprisingly it was immediately **flooded with upwards of 37,000 fake comments opposing the idea of taxing the rich**:

"Beyond those individual cases, organizers said they identified 37,824 additional opposition sign-ins generated through thousands of duplicate name submissions across House and Senate hearings combined. In more than 15,000 instances, they said, identical names were entered repeatedly — sometimes 50 to 100 times. Many of the submissions were filed late at night or in rapid succession."

The state's wealthy (and the lawmakers paid to love them) are still trying to claim that the flood of provably false opposition to the bill only supports their claims that nobody wants the state's wealthiest to actually pay a little more for regional societal improvements:

"Opponents of the tax, including state Republican leaders and hedge fund manager Brian Heywood, have leaned on the wave of opposition sign-ins as proof the proposal lacks public support."

"More than 60,000 people signed in against SB 6346 when it received a rushed hearing in the Senate," Sen. John Braun, R-Centralia, said in a Feb. 16 statement. "That is so impressive that Democrats have tried to say bots are responsible, even though the Legislature blocks bots."

(The legislature did not effectively block bots).

All these are, it might go without saying, generally the same kinds of folks **waging an all out war on U.S. journalism**. More broadly this is a war on informed consensus, and it doesn't take too much time looking around to see which side of this particular war is winning. Regardless of what policy you support, we're supposed to, at the very least, be capable of a useful, honest conversation about policy.

But as we noted way back when the telecom industry was caught stuffing the FCC comment system with fake comments by fake and dead **people opposing net neutrality** (they **even used my name**, if you recall), you just **know** your position is a **winner** when you have to *create entirely fake people to support it*.

Filed Under: **fake comments, law, public input, tax the rich, washington state**

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twriter (profile) March 10, 2026 at 4:30 pm

"Mysteriously" doing a lot of heavy lifting in that headline.

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[2]

Anonymous Coward March 10, 2026 at 9:14 pm

Re:

America's\$ God work\$ in my\$terious\$ way\$

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Anonymous Coward March 10, 2026 at 4:32 pm

There has been fakery in comment sections for some time now, at least a few years. Youtube comment sections routinely have videos that get questionable comments with 60+ likes ten minutes after it goes live. I've always assumed foreign "counter intelligence" operations, countering the intelligence of the American public. They gotta do something all day long.

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David March 10, 2026 at 4:55 pm

You mean "AI Fake Comments"

A "Fake AI Comment" would be not really a comment from an AI.

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[2]

Anonymous Coward March 10, 2026 at 6:20 pm

Re:

But if we're being pedantic, what would a "fake comment" be? I say that if some text shows up in a comment section, it is by definition a real comment. Auto-generated slop is still *real* (unfortunately).

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[3]

Ngita (profile) March 11, 2026 at 4:42 pm

Re: Re:

Auto-generated slop is not actually real, which is the whole point.

now if someone wants to gather 10,000 popsicles sticks and mail them in separate envelopes with hand written slogans to a competition you have to admire there dedication,

But buying/writing a script that send the exact same message with the exact same name is just lazy time wasting, 10,000 times should have no bigger influence then 1 person. the stadium has been brought our to show support and you see one guy waving and clapping and then the camera pans out and the entire stadium is empty its just this one guy who spent money.

On the taxing the rich, eh as long as they can move you won't see significant gains and tax rules should be written well ie years used fixed amounts that in 10 years rich=merely wealthy and 10 years after that is slightly above average salary.

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[4]

Anonymous Coward March 11, 2026 at 5:06 pm

Re: Re: Re:

Auto-generated slop is not actually real, which is the whole point.

What does "real" mean here? It may not indicate a real support for a political issue, but the "real" means remains as real as the asteroid belt (despite that being the meaningless result of random activity in space).

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Anonymous Coward March 10, 2026 at 6:06 pm

"It blocks bots."

Well, your state is unique, then, in having thousands of people with the same names, who can post comments within microseconds of each other.

You fucking douche.

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[2]

Anonymous Coward March 11, 2026 at 3:04 pm

Re:

"It blocks bots."

...does not mean it does so with any particular accuracy. If 2 were blocked, the statement is accurate.

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ECA (profile) March 10, 2026 at 7:03 pm

INSIDER

lets see

Miracle on 34th street, Santa and lawyer trying to Prove Santa is there. FCC chair person, Showing up with ##### emails saying they Like Corps controlling the internet?

Really love that the corps can get away with stuff like this, and have Done for years.

Iv Never seen/Hear when the congress ASKED that the Citizens reply to something.

NOW we have AI, and all you need do, is ask it to do the job. Its NOT AI, if it wasnt the computers Idea.

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Ed (profile) March 11, 2026 at 6:05 am

INSIDER

MAKE BILLIONAIRES EXTINCT!

Make it physically impossible to accumulate that much wealth and power.

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[2]

Ngita (profile) March 11, 2026 at 5:00 pm

Re:

I wouldn't want to live in a country that was under a strict enough regime to achieve that.

Would you propose the government instead spend a billion dollars a year on a department with that goal?

with inflation is say 100 years you will be talking about trillionaires and there will be entire suburbs of billion dollar houses.

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Pixelation March 11, 2026 at 8:55 am

Republicans championed income tax

"When Republicans invented national taxation they the extraordinary needs of the Civil War, they immediately instituted a progressive federal income tax because, as Representative Justin Smith Morrill (R-VT) said, "The weight [of taxation] must be distributed equally, not upon each man an equal amount, but a tax proportionate to his ability to pay."

The rich hate carrying their fair share of the load. It's why we have Trump as our president. He can't stand the idea of proportionate taxation.

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The Phule March 11, 2026 at 12:52 pm

Freedom of speech

Yeah, this is a clear and obvious side effect of not having laws against certain types of speech, especially by companies.

Whatever "freedom of speech" you think individuals should have, a corporation isn't a person and has too much power to allow it any sort of freedom.

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That One Guy (profile) March 11, 2026 at 5:01 pm

INSIDER

The Holy Grail of tech

"More than 60,000 people signed in against SB 6346 when it received a rushed hearing in the Senate," Sen. John Braun, R-Centralia, said in a Feb. 16 statement. "That is so impressive that Democrats have tried to say bots are responsible, even though the Legislature blocks bots."

If Washington state's legislature have figured out a way to *effectively ban bots* then they don't need a single tax-dodging millionaire or billionaire in the state, they can sell that tech to every company and platform with a user submission form and make roughly **all** the money.

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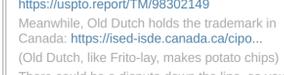
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BentFranklin: I think Rep. Andy Ogles R-TN is the one who has not assimilated: <https://bsky.app/profile/cooper1...>

Leah Abram: He's a fucking white supremacist.

aabsurdity: It goes to show how removed the rich are from the "normal folk" of the USA, because that truly is a man who would be bashed in the face with a rock the moment he left his house/compound/castle.

Leah Abram: @timothygeigner you might be interested in this; or at least keep this in the back of your mind for the future:

Frito Lay holds the trademark for the word "swicy" in the US: <https://uspto.report/TM/98302149>

Meanwhile, Old Dutch holds the trademark in Canada: <https://ised-isde.canada.ca/cipo...> (Old Dutch, like Frito-lay, makes potato chips)

There could be a dispute down the line, so you could keep this information in your back pocket.

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