



NEWS

AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

1920 L Street, NW • Suite 200 • Washington, DC 20036
202.785.0266 • Fax 202.785.0261

WWW.ATR.ORG

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CONTACT: Paul Proski
Amanda Serbu
202-785-0266

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Fact of the Day #4: Mayor Daley Plans to Close Chicago Down for Business

WASHINGTON, D.C. – While Chicago has a long and illustrious history as a convention and meeting site, and is attracting millions of visitors per year, this may soon change. While other major cities look for ways to establish themselves as attractive tourism and business venues, Mayor Daley seems to be doing the opposite in Chicago.

Daley's 2005 budget proposal, which includes a wide array of tax increases, would specifically hurt the tourism industry, and would significantly drive up the cost for holding conventions. Ultimately, Chicago would find itself at a competitive disadvantage compared to other tourism and convention venues.

According to the Chicago Convention and Tourism Bureau, Chicago attracted 29 million visitors in 2003, bringing over \$8.7 billion in direct expenditures to the city annually.

These visitors would be hurt by the following tax increases, and would be likely to take their direct expenditures elsewhere:

-  0.25 percentage point sales tax increase
-  25-cent parking tax increase
-  0.5 percent increase in hotel tax, making it the highest among the nation's top 10 convention cities
-  32-cent cigarette tax increase increase
-  One percentage point amusement tax increase
-  Liquor tax increase of seven cents on a case of beer and six cents on a fifth of whiskey
-  \$1 tax on leased and rented cars

Chicago's over 30,000 hotel rooms and McCormick Place, North America's largest convention center, may soon be empty.

Chicago cannot afford Mayor Daley's plan to close down the city!

Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact Chris Butler at (202) 785-0266 or by email at cbutler@atr.org