



NEWS

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New Report: Colorado Has A Lower Cost of Government Than National Average

Annual Cost of Government Day Report highlights TABOR, Owens

WASHINGTON — According to a new report by Americans for Tax Reform (ATR), a government watchdog group, Colorado ranks 25th of the 50 states in the cost of its government.

This is the conclusion of the 2002 Cost of Government Day report, a study ATR has published for the past ten years. The study was designed to emphasize to key policy makers and the public that the cost of government in America is too high at the local, state, and federal levels. As such, the report calculates the day when the average American resident will be done paying all federal, state, and local spending in addition to federal and state regulations.

“The average American citizen will work 181 days this year just to cover the cost of government,” said taxpayer advocate Grover Norquist, who heads ATR in Washington. **“Colorado is a little lower at 178 days, but working anywhere near that much for the government is far, far too much.”**

The report notes, however, that Colorado’s Taxpayers’ Bill of Rights (TABOR) is a model for the nation to keep state taxes and spending low. Colorado is one of the few states with a decreasing tax and spending burden, largely due to TABOR and Governor Owens, who has rigorously enforced the program.

When Governor Owens came into office in 1999 Tax Freedom Day was April 28th, four days later than the average Colorado resident will have to work this year.

“The decline can be attributed to the TABOR program returning the surplus back to taxpayers whereas other states spent their surpluses on permanent programs,” said Damon Ansell, Vice-President of Policy for ATR. **“Under Governor Owens’ leadership, the lower state tax and spending burden has mitigated some of the negative effects of the rapidly rising cost of the federal government.”**

Cost of Government Day for America as a whole fell on July 1st of this year, according to the report, which is available on ATR’s website at www.ATR.org/cogd2002. But in Colorado, which is a relatively less-taxed and regulated state, the day fell on June 28th.

The study measured the average tax burden borne by American taxpayers, and added that total to the cost of federal and state regulations. The report says that regulations act as hidden tax increases that make goods and services more expensive to consumers. Colorado taxpayers finished paying their taxes on April 24th. Regulations cost another 63 days of work.

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

Although Colorado is among the less taxed states in the nation, the burdens placed upon the citizens still have a negative real effect on their productivity and freedom in the economic sector. Cost of Government Day aims to alert citizens to the imposition placed upon them by their governments.