



# NEWS

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## **Florida TaxWatch Study: Analysis of the Collection and Allocation of Court-Related Revenues within Florida's Judicial System**

**TALLAHASSEE** — Florida TaxWatch, a statewide nonpartisan, nonprofit research institute, announces the results of a study examining the state's current system of funding and monitoring the court-related operations of the clerks of the circuit court.

### Key Findings of the Report:

- The decentralized nature of the current system leads to wide variations in cost efficiency, effectiveness of collecting court-related revenue, and accountability for budgeted expenditures;
- There are no incentives or requirements for individual clerks to improve cost efficiency. If cost efficiency standards were imposed, **cost savings of between \$34 million and \$140 million could be achieved;**
- The state does not appropriately allocate resources between the clerks and the trial courts (both of which perform important functions of the judicial system); and,
- Florida's clerks of the circuit court have a critically important role in the processes of Florida's judicial system, a comprehensive study of the potential costs and benefits of consolidation of the clerks' court-related functions within the State Courts System is needed before such consolidation should be undertaken.

"Florida TaxWatch has conducted an independent study that reviews the transparency and efficiency of a system that must be accountable to Florida's taxpayers," said Dominic M. Calabro, President and CEO of Florida TaxWatch. "During these difficult economic times we must ensure that every tax dollar is spent wisely, appropriately, and to the greatest benefit of all in order to serve our citizens well."

Recommendations from the Florida TaxWatch report, *Florida TaxWatch Study: Analysis of the Collection and Allocation of Court-Related Revenues within Florida's Judicial System*, include:

- The creation and implementation of cost efficiency standards on individual clerks and the system as a whole;
- The integration of incremental cost efficiency improvements over the next two years;

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- Improvement in the current system to improve the transparency, public accountability, and uniformity of individual clerks' expenditures; and
- Legislative review and appropriations of the clerks' court-related (not their local functional) expenditures to ensure the necessary checks and balances and proper accountability, as it does for the state attorneys and public defenders who are also constitutionally elected officials serving the critically important function of the broad State Courts System.

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[Click Here to View Research Report](#)

Florida TaxWatch is a statewide, non-profit, non-partisan research institute that over its 30 year history has become widely recognized as the watchdog of citizens' hard-earned tax dollars. Its mission is to provide the citizens of Florida and public officials with high quality, independent research and education on government revenues, expenditures, taxation, public policies and programs and to increase the productivity and accountability of Florida Government. Its support comes from homeowners and retirees, small and large businesses, philanthropic foundations, and professional associations. On the web at [www.FloridaTaxWatch.org](http://www.FloridaTaxWatch.org).