



# NEWS

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## **FLORIDA TAXPAYER INDEPENDENCE DAY 2009 – APRIL 19** *Independence Day Ties Record as Earliest in More than Three Decades*

**TALLAHASSEE** — As of Sunday, April 19, 2009, Floridians began earning for themselves, not the tax collector. The symbolic date, dubbed *Florida Taxpayer Independence Day* and annually estimated by Florida TaxWatch, assumes that every dollar earned since January 1 goes to pay federal, state, and local tax obligations. This year, independence day came early – in fact, April 19 shares the distinction of being the earliest of the 33 Taxpayer Independence Days that Florida TaxWatch has calculated (it was also April 19 in 1983). Still, the mid-April date means that Floridians have to work for 108 days of the 365 in 2009 exclusively for the benefit of their government, approximately a third of the year.

“It’s important for Floridians to know how much of their effort actually goes just to pay their taxes,” explained **Dominic M. Calabro**, President & CEO of Florida TaxWatch. “That’s why this yearly report is so important; because a well informed citizenry is the cornerstone of a well functioning democracy, and we hope this report will help Floridians better understand the real level of their tax burden.”

Unfortunately, according to the report, the reduction in tax burden reflected by the early date this year is due more to a poor economy than a large increase in Floridians’ personal income or tax cuts. The current state and national recession has reduced governments’ tax collections even more than it has reduced taxpayers’ personal income. Personal income growth in Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 is forecasted at only 0.5% and, in FY 2010, personal income growth is expected to actually decline (-0.4%), the first annual decline in recent history. However, total taxes (federal, state, and local) paid by Floridians are expected to fall 3.3% in 2009. The largest portion of Floridians’ taxes – federal taxes – will be affected by the economy and the large temporary tax cuts contained in the federal stimulus package. Additionally, state tax collections have been enduring an unprecedented decline, shrinking for each of the past three years and resulting in an estimated decrease of 18 percent over the three-year period (FY 2007-09).

[Click here to view the full report](#) or visit [www.FloridaTaxWatch.org/research](http://www.FloridaTaxWatch.org/research).

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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 state and local 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).