



NEWS

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CONTACT: Tiffany Koenigkramer
Communications Director
850-222-5052

FLORIDA TAXPAYER INDEPENDENCE DAY 2007 – APRIL 29 ***Floridians' Income Should Keep Pace with Taxes***

TALLAHASSEE — Sunday, April 29, 2007, is Florida Taxpayer Independence Day. Beginning this day, Floridians will be earning for themselves, not the tax collector. This symbolic date assumes that every dollar earned since January 1 goes to pay federal, state, and local tax obligations. On average, Floridians' personal income will keep pace with the taxes they pay, meaning it will take the same number of days to pay their tax bills in 2007 as it did in 2006. Floridians will need to work 118 days, approximately a third of the year, to pay their taxes.

"Thinking that everything we've worked for since New Year's Day has gone strictly to pay the government is a hard bite to swallow," said Dominic M. Calabro, President of Florida TaxWatch. "The Legislature should work together to bring these rapidly rising taxes down so Floridians' aren't spending a third of the year working for the government."

Although Florida Taxpayer Independence Day falls on the same day as last year, it is three days later than in 2005 and seven days later than in 2004.

Floridians' income should grow faster than their federal and state tax obligations, but increasing local property taxes will keep Floridians from achieving tax freedom earlier this year than last. Local taxes are projected to grow 17% this year, while federal taxes are expected to grow 5.6% and state taxes are expected to decrease by 1.3%.

"Many Floridians are suffering from escalating property taxes," said Kurt Wenner, Senior Research Analyst at Florida TaxWatch and author of the report. "Local government taxes are rising almost three times faster than federal taxes and twice as fast as state taxes."

Even though they are the smallest portion of our tax obligation, local taxes are the fastest growing taxes in Florida. Since 2000, local taxes have grown by an average annual rate of 10.4%. This compares to 5.5% for state taxes and 3.5% for federal taxes.

(More)

On average, it takes 2 hours and 34 minutes of every eight-hour workday to pay taxes, workers' largest expense. Federal taxes alone take up 1 hour and 42 minutes of the 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. day, adding 28 minutes for state and 24 minutes for local tax obligations, it is 11:34 a.m. before workers are earning for themselves. This compares to working 1 hour and 22 minutes for housing and utility costs, 1 hour and 8 minutes for health and medical care and 40 minutes for food.

“At some point, taxes should not be our highest expense,” said Calabro. “We should be working to provide for our families and making a better life for our children.”

Florida TaxWatch created Taxpayer Independence Day in 1983 to keep taxpayers informed about the cost of government at all levels and how the growth of that cost compares to Floridians' ability to pay for it.

[Click here to view the full report.](#)

MEDIA ADVISORY: Dominic M. Calabro, President of Florida TaxWatch and Kurt Wenner, Senior Research Analyst at Florida TaxWatch and author of the report will be available today for interviews. Please contact Tiffany Koenigkramer, (850)-222-5052 to make arrangements.

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Florida TaxWatch is a statewide, non-profit, non-partisan research institute that over its 28 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. On the web at www.FloridaTaxWatch.org.