



Failure: Tax hikes lead to Bentley receiving ‘F’ grade from conservative group

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Governor Bentley has fallen from grace in a new biannual scorecard released by the CATO Institute, a Washington-based think tank that promotes limited government and free markets. While Bentley had received a “B” in 2014, Alabama’s top leader has now been given an “F”.

CATO says that Bentley received the poor grade due to his aggressive policy switch on taxes.

“Governors receiving an F have put government expansion ahead of the public’s need to keep it hard-earned money,” the CATO scorecard said.

“Governor Robert Bentley dropped from a B in the last report card to an F in this one due to his support of major tax increases,” the report explained. “In his first few years in office, Bentley generally opposed tax increases, but in 2015 he made a U-turn. He proposed a tax increase of more than \$500 million a year, including increases on businesses, cigarettes, automobile sales, automobile rentals, and other items.”

Bentley also received low marks for proposing spending raises in the state’s general fund budget.

Of the ten lowest scoring governors, seven are Democrats. Only three who received an F are Republicans, including Bentley. While the average score for a Republican governor fell at 57, Alabama’s governor received a 39.

This is not the first time the Governor has come under fire for his tax proposals. After pledging “No new taxes” in his 2014 campaign for re-election, he announced that he would propose increases only weeks after being sworn back into office.

“We are going to raise taxes,” Gov. Bentley said in a 2015 interview with the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama. “After four years of saying we’re not raising taxes, and we have not, I’m telling you, for the next four years we are going to raise taxes.”

The embattled governor is currently facing the possibility of impeachment, as a panel of House lawmakers have begun proceedings that could determine whether or not there are grounds to remove Bentley from office.