



It's getting' all FREE up in here

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The Cato Institute — the flagship think tank for the nation's libertarian movement — has some good things to say about the Tar Heel State in its most recent “Freedom in the 50 states” report.:

North Carolina is a rapidly growing southern state with a reasonably good economic freedom profile and an even better record on personal freedom, especially when compared with its neighbors.

We show improvement on most fiscal policies in the 2010–14 period. State taxes fell from 5.8 percent of personal income to a projected 5.4 percent. Local taxes also fell between FY 2011 and FY 2012, to 3.2 percent. Subsidies increased slightly but are still below average, while debt and government employment fell. Government employment is a bit above the national average at 14.3 percent of the private workforce, possibly due to the prevalence of public hospitals.

Despite large immigration, North Carolina has disdained controls on the housing supply. Labor law is good, with no minimum wage, a right-to-work law, and relatively relaxed workers' compensation rules. Cable and telecommunications have been liberalized. Occupational freedom is a weak spot, especially for the health professions. A sunrise review requirement for occupational licensing proposals was scrapped in 2011–12.

We're ranked at #19 out of 50. (That's up from #23 in 2012.)

Here's something for Mike Causey to hit Wayne Goodwin on — *other than that whole affair with the shady lobbyist*:

North Carolina is one of the worst states for insurance freedom. It has a large residual market for personal automobile insurance, prior approval for homeowner's insurance rates, prior approval for life insurance forms, and rate classification prohibitions. It also has a price-gouging law and a minimum-markup law for gasoline. Its civil liability system is worse than average.

North Carolina has one of the best criminal justice regimes in the South. Incarceration and victimless crime arrest rates are all below average. There is no state-level civil asset forfeiture at

all, but local law enforcement frequently does an end-run around the law through the Department of Justice's equitable sharing program. In most personal freedom categories, North Carolina is actually below average, but it enjoys its high ranking in 2014 because of its criminal justice policies, having been forced to legalize same-sex marriage, and having passed a statewide voucher program in 2014.

This next part, though, ought to attract the attention of "The Second Amendment People" Donald Trump was talking about:

Gun rights are more restricted than in many other southern states, with carry licenses somewhat costly to obtain and hedged with limitations. Plus, buying a pistol requires a permit, there is local dealer licensing, and most Class III weapons are difficult to obtain (sound suppressors were legalized in 2013–14).