



Alaska places 2nd in freedom ranking

August 16, 2016

Alaska is the second-freest state in the U.S., by one measurement.

The libertarian Cato Institute's latest "Freedom in the 50 States" ranking puts Alaska behind New Hampshire when it comes to government spending, regulation, and personal freedom.

Alaska moves up seven spots from the Cato Institute's last ranking in 2012. The report notes that Alaska is unique due to its economic dependence on energy prices and the consolidate nature of local government.

Personal freedom is shown by relatively few drug arrests and by unregulated homeschooling. Alaska is also the only state considered tolerant of both marijuana and guns.

In addition to evaluating each state, the Cato Institute recommends its policy preferences. For Alaska, the report suggests cutting spending on education and lowering corporate taxes in order to diversify the economy; preventing labor unions from requiring workers to pay dues; and reforming Alaska's civil asset forfeiture, which the Cato Institute calls the worst in the nation, to require a criminal conviction before property is seized.

New York and California are ranked as the states with the least freedom.