



## **New York spends twice as much as Florida to keep things running**

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New York's state and local governments spend nearly twice as much to provide services as Florida — particularly on education and welfare — even though their populations are roughly the same, a new study claims.

New York governments spent \$348 billion in 2017 compared to \$177 billion for their government counterparts in Florida, [the report by the Cato Institute found](#).

New York has about 20 million citizens. Florida has 21 million, having surpassed the Empire State in population several years ago.

The analysis, based on census data, said the two states spend roughly the same on services including transportation, police, fire, parks, sewers and trash management.

But New York spent \$69 billion on K-12 schools in 2017 compared to Florida's \$28 billion. The states have about the same number of kids enrolled — 2.7 million in New York and 2.8 million in Florida, the report said.

New York also spent \$71 billion on public welfare programs for the needy compared to Florida's \$28 billion.

There are differences that should be taken into account. New York has a provision in its state constitution that it must provide aid to the needy, and it imposes income taxes to provide mandated services. Florida has no income tax.

The analysis also found that New York governments employ 34% more workers than Florida governments — 1.2 million versus 900,000. It also found that public employees in New York make 41% more than in Florida, \$73,611 on average compared to \$51,809.

But Cato cautioned that the difference could be overblown because Florida may contract out more services to the private sector, such as for trash management, than does New York. A much higher percentage of New York's government workforce also is unionized compared to lower-cost Florida.

“That said, the New York worker count in some areas seems inordinately large. The two states have similar K-12 school enrollments of 2.7 million in New York and 2.8 million in Florida. But New York employs 31% more teachers and administrators than Florida,” the study said.

“Do the 111,000 extra staff in New York generate better school outcomes? Apparently not,” Cato said, pointing to another group study that puts Florida ahead of New York on school quality.

The study says New York’s sanitation workers make 92% more in wages than do Florida’s, New York’s K-12 teachers and others school staffers make 71% more and its transit workers make 68% more.

The Cato report comes as other recent studies by the Empire Center for Public Policy show New York’s population declining in recent years, by 76,790 residents since 2016.

New York is also a net exporter of residents to other states, with 180,649 more people moving out than from moving in from other states since 2018.

The Empire State has lost a net 1.4 million residents to the rest of the country since 2010. More than 20% moved to Florida.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s office slammed the report.

“Sounds like this ginned-up study from a group of right-wing 19th century robber baron wannabes fail to mention that New York is Washington’s favorite ATM, paying \$26.6 billion more in federal taxes than we get back while Florida receives \$45.9 billion more than it pays,” said Cuomo senior adviser Rich Azzopardi.

“Get a calculator.”