



Dori: Report gives Inslee ‘F’ grade on taxes, spending

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Dori Monson Show

Citing his support for increases in payroll, carbon taxes, real estate excise, and gross receipts taxes, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee finished last in a ranking of state governors.

The Cato Institute, a 45-year-old American libertarian think tank, gave Inslee an “F” on its Fiscal Policy Report Card on the country’s governors, said Chris Edwards, the organization’s chair of fiscal studies, on the Dori Monson Show Monday.

“Not only did Inslee get an ‘F’ grade, but he was the f-iest of the Fs,” Dori noted in the governor’s 28-out-of-100 score. Oregon and California Governors Kate Brown and Gavin Newsom notched one point higher, but still earned “F” grades, as did four other governors – all Democrats who scored between 29 and 34.

It’s a completely non-partisan study based on the hard data,” said Edwards.

Data-driven grades awarded by the institute’s report are based on seven variables using the same methodology Cato has been using every other year for the past 16 years.

“I would love Democrats to score higher,” Edwards said.

While current Sen. Joe Manchin was governor of West Virginia from 2005-2010, the economist added, he earned high grades from The Cato report partially based on increasing spending by 1% each year.

Inslee’s grade, Edwards continued, was based – in part – on his spending practices, which “have increased at a galloping rate of 6.3%, year in and year out. That’s one of the fastest in the nation.”

Simultaneously, the report examines spending choices made by governors and explores recent policy trends.

One example Edwards cited: The past two years, 21 states have cut individual or corporate income taxes. Another 20 have provided one-time tax rebates, the report shows. Taxes in Washington state, meanwhile, have increased.

The Libertarian economist told Dori's listeners that he prefers a system that would give taxpayers a better understanding of how their taxes are being used by assigning three levels of government their own tax source: A federal flat income tax, state government sales tax, and local government property tax.

"If we organized it that way, it would be clear the citizenry who is responsible for which taxes and which government is taking their money," he said.