



Louisiana's Edwards Scores A C For His Fiscal, Tax Policies

Steve Wilson

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(The Center Square) — A recently released scorecard by the Cato Institute gave Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards a C grade for his fiscal and tax policy.

The libertarian policy group ranked all 50 governors on a 100-point scale in its biennial Fiscal Policy Report Card on America's Governors, with Edwards scoring a 53, tied with Republican Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine.

Edwards scored better than 12 Republican governors, a list that includes Texas Gov. Greg Abbott and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis.

Edwards was the third-highest rated Democrat governor, scoring behind North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper (64) and New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham (56).

The two-term Democrat was penalized in 2018, earning an F for his policies, but the bills he signed into law in 2021 helped boost his score to a C, the same as it was in the 2020 report.

In 2021, Edwards signed into law tax reforms in House Bill 278, which was approved by voters as a constitutional amendment. The reforms capped the top individual income tax rate at 4.75% and also cut rates in addition to eliminating the deduction for federal taxes paid.

The state's income tax rates were cut from 2%, 4% and 6% to 1.85%, 3.5% and 4.25% and triggers in the law will allow rates to automatically be reduced even further if revenue targets are met.

He also signed into law HB 292, which cut the state's corporate tax rate from 8% to 7.5% and prevented corporations in the Pelican State from receiving a deduction for their federal taxes paid.

In addition, Edwards signed into law Senate Bill 161, which increased the exemption levels for the state's corporate franchise tax.

The worst governors on the scorecard, all Democrats, were Gov. Jay Inslee of Washington, Gov. Gavin Newsom of California, Gov. Kate Brown of Oregon, Gov. Phil Murphy of New Jersey and Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.

The top five governors on the list were Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds, New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu, Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts, Idaho Gov. Brad Little and Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey. All are Republicans.