



South Carolina Gov. McMaster Given A 'B' By Cato Institute for Fiscal Policies

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(The Center Square) — South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster was given a "B" for his performance by the Cato Institute in its annual Fiscal Report Card on America's Governors.

McMaster pushed for lowering the state's income tax rate several times and this year, along with the South Carolina Legislature, he got the rate lowered along with approving income tax rebate checks that should be sent to residents in November and December.

The checks are a full refund for those who paid \$800 or less, which includes 33% of taxpayers.

Anyone who paid \$100 in taxes will receive the \$100 rebate and that rebate will grow along with tax liability up to a cap of \$800 per tax filing. Those who did not pay income taxes will not receive a rebate.

"McMaster has vetoed tax increases and pushed for major income tax reforms," Cato said. "In 2017, he vetoed a transportation bill that phased in a 12 cent per gallon gas tax increase, but the Legislature overrode him. In 2018, he proposed cutting individual income tax rates across the board."

South Carolina's gas tax rose for six consecutive years with the funds going toward road, bridge and infrastructure construction. The state gas tax is now 28 cents per gallon, part of a Motor Fuel User Fee that began on July 1, 2017 and has led to \$898.4 million in additional gas taxes paid in the state through March 2022.

The tax has gone from 16 cents a gallon in early 2017 to 28 cents a gallon.

"The governor approved other tax cuts this year, including cuts on veterans' retirement income and one-time nonrefundable rebates of up to \$800," Cato wrote. "McMaster also approved reductions in property taxes on manufacturing companies, which should boost growth by increasing returns to capital investment."

Cato Institute gave "A" grades to Kim Reynolds of Iowa, Chris Sununu of New Hampshire, Pete Ricketts of Nebraska, Brad Little of Idaho, and Doug Ducey of Arizona. All are Republicans.

It gave "F" grades to Tim Walz of Minnesota, Tom Wolf of Pennsylvania, J. B. Pritzker of Illinois, Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan, Phil Murphy of New Jersey, Kate Brown of Oregon, Gavin Newsom of California and Jay Inslee of Washington. All are Democrats.