

# The Miami Herald

## Conservative think-tank gives Scott an 'A' in cutting biz taxes, gov't spending

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When it comes to cutting taxes for businesses, Gov. Rick Scott received an 'A' grade from the conservative Cato Institute, which gave Florida's governor's high marks for his fiscal policy.

Scott received a '69' score—the highest in the country—on Cato's Fiscal Policy Report Card, after slashing Florida's corporate income tax and offering other tax cuts.

While the Cato Institute's report card refers to the tax cuts as “pro-growth,” the report did not rate governors according to actual economic growth. Instead, “the governors receiving an 'A' are those who cut taxes and spending the most,” the report reads.

In the area of job growth, Florida is a middle-runner, ranking 25<sup>th</sup> in the nation over the last year, under Scott's economic policies. Florida's job creation rate is lower than the national average and long-term unemployment is worst in the nation.

Still, Scott compared well against other governors in states that have faced spiraling budget problems and out-of-control spending. Cato gave Scott high marks for “substantial budget cuts” and cutting thousands of jobs from state government, as well as for various business-focused tax cuts.

“Rick Scott of Florida has championed major tax and spending reforms. He has proposed substantial budget cuts, vetoed hundreds of millions of dollars of wasteful spending, and trimmed state employment,” the Cato Institute report reads. “Scott is also determined to give Florida the best economic climate for business investment and job creation in the country.”

For comparison, Gov. Charlie Crist received an 'A' grade in 2008, but the one-time 'Most Conservative Governor' fell out of favor with the Cato Institute, receiving a 'D' by 2010.

In 2006, Gov. Jeb Bush received a 'C' grade.