
NW DAILY MARKER

The Best Conversations Start Here.

Gregoire Receives 'F' on Report Card on U.S. Governors' Handling of State Finances

BY BRYAN MYRICK - OCTOBER 11TH, 2012

Washington State Gov. Christine Gregoire (D) will leave office after this year, but not before earning a failing grade on her handling of the state's fiscal affairs, according to a new report released by libertarian think tank The Cato Institute.

Gregoire's also received a failing mark in Cato's 2011 report.

Cato's "Fiscal Policy Report Card on America's Governors: 2012," flunked Gregoire this year along with the governors of four other states: Govs. Neil Abercrombie of Hawaii, Mark Dayton of Minnesota, Dan Malloy of Connecticut and Pat Quinn of Illinois. All of the five governors receiving 'F's from Cato are Democrats.

Cato's analysis looked at Gregoire's tax policies and found ample reason to stick her with the bad grade. From the report:

Chris Gregoire of Washington earned a well-deserved "F" on the last Cato report card. There has been a never-ending stream of tax-increase proposals coming from this governor since 2005. In her first year, she raised taxes on cigarettes, gasoline, liquor, and vehicles. She also re-established an estate tax after a previous version had been struck down by the courts. In 2009 she signed into law increases in business taxes, sales taxes, cigarette taxes, beer taxes, soda taxes, and candy taxes. In 2010 she approved a large increase in the cigarette tax, a huge hospital tax, and increases in business taxes and beer taxes. In 2011 she proposed a half cent increase in the sales tax rate, but that was rejected by the legislature. In 2012 Gregoire proposed a new tax on crude oil to raise \$275 million a year.

Some readers may also remember that Washington state earned a low spot in *Chief Executive Magazine's* ranking earlier this year of the best states to do business in.

Washington came in at number 37 in their survey of 650 U.S. chief executives, many of whom cited reasons similar to those of Cato for judging the Evergreen State as less than hospitable to private business.