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Will New Yorkers ever be free of endless government rules and sky-high taxes?

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Among the gripes: New York's Big Brother government too often tells businesses what to do. Its smoking bans and "stratospheric" cigarette taxes make it worst for tobacco freedom. Rent control is "economically devastating."

The study cites New York's fireworks ban, restrictive gun laws, minimum wage and prohibition on selling wine in groceries. And, of course, taxes: twice the average state.

Cato is concerned about how state "policies promote freedom in the fiscal, regulatory and personal realms." When government rules are so restrictive, folks lose the ability to choose how they wish to live.

But New York's limitations also hamper the economy: High taxes, minimum-wage laws and onerous regulations make New York a lousy place to do business. Jobs suffer.

Albany and City Hall need to lighten up; New Yorkers deserve the same freedoms other Americans enjoy. In the process, they'll be unleashing the economy, too.