



Giving the grades on the govts

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The Cato Institute has released its annual fiscal policy report card on America's governors.

"We look at the tax-and-spending performance of the governors of the states over the last two years from a small-government perspective," explains Chris Edwards, director of tax policy studies at Cato Institute.

"We give the high grades to the governors who have restrained spending and reformed taxes; and we give the low grades to the governors who have increased spending and taxes the most."

This year, five governors received an "A" – one of them being Mike Pence of Indiana, who now is teamed up with Donald Trump on the GOP presidential ticket. Ten received an "F," among them Governor Jerry Brown (D-California).

"[Governor Brown] has received an 'F' on prior report cards," says Edwards. "He is sort of like an energizer bunny of tax increases. He always wants more tax increases and the California budget has increased 23 percent in just the last three years."

Governor Nikki Haley (R-South Carolina) received a "D."

"On spending [she] has not done a very good job," says Edwards. "It's really important to look at the actual data here and see how fiscally conservative these politicians are."

Two Democrats received a "B." Several Republicans got a "C" or worse.

Cato's entire "Fiscal Policy Report Card on America's Governors 2016" is available [here](#). It is the 13th such report issued by the Institute.