

NEWS RELEASE

New Hampshire most economically-free state, New York least-free for sixth consecutive year

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For Immediate Release

TORONTO, Ontario, —New Hampshire has retained its status as the most economically-free state in the union, finds a new report released today by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

New Hampshire scored 7.84 out of 10 in this year's report (down from 7.93 last year), beating out second-place Florida (7.73).

Economic freedom—the ability of individuals to make their own economic decisions including what to buy, where to work and whether to start a business—is fundamental to prosperity.

“When governments allow markets to decide what’s produced, how it’s produced and how much is produced, citizens enjoy greater levels of economic freedom,” said Fred McMahon, the Dr. Michael A. Walker Research Chair in Economic Freedom at the Fraser Institute and co-author of this year’s [*Economic Freedom of North America*](#) report, which measures government spending, taxation and labor market restrictions using data from 2018, the latest year of available comparable data.

Rounding out the top five freest states are Virginia (3rd), Texas (4th) and Tennessee (5th). At the other end of the index, New York (50th) is once again the least-free state followed by West Virginia (49th), Alaska (48th), California (47th) and Vermont (46th).

From 2004 to 2018, the average score for U.S. states in the all-government index fell from 8.31 to 7.97. Across North America, the least-free quartile of jurisdictions had an average per-capita income 8.1 per cent below the national average compared to 4.6 per cent above the national average for the most-free quartile.

“Higher levels of economic freedom lead to more opportunity, more prosperity, greater economic growth, more investment and jobs,” said Dean Stansel, report co-author and economics professor at Southern Methodist University.

The [*Economic Freedom of North America*](#) report (also co-authored by José Torra, the head of research at the Mexico City-based Caminos de la Libertad) is an offshoot of the Fraser Institute’s [*Economic Freedom of the World*](#) index, the result of more than a quarter century of work by more than 60 scholars including three Nobel laureates.

Detailed tables for each country and subnational jurisdiction can be found at www.fraserinstitute.org.

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