Quarterly Summary of State and Local Government Tax Revenue

TAX REVENUE INCREASES FOR TENTH STRAIGHT QUARTER

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STATE AND LOCAL TAX COLLECTIONS

First quarter 2012 (2012:1) tax revenues for state and local governments, as compared with first quarter 2011 (2011:1), were up 1.5 percent, marking the tenth consecutive quarter of positive year-over-year growth. Tax revenue for the quarter totaled $325.3 billion, as compared with $320.6 billion reported for the first quarter of 2011.

TAXES BY CATEGORY

Property Tax

Total state and local property tax revenue remained steady with the 2011 first quarter amount at $114.6 billion. Local governments collected $110.7 billion of total property tax revenue, a decrease of 0.9 percent from the same quarter in 2011.

Of the largest tax categories, general sales tax and individual income tax showed growth over the same quarter in 2011. Corporate income tax declined for the second quarter in a row.
Individual Income Tax

Individual income tax grew for the eighth consecutive quarter compared to the same quarter of previous years. State and local individual income revenue in 2012:1 was $67.0 billion, up 1.4 percent from $66.1 billion in 2011:1.

General Sales Tax

General sales tax revenue rose 5.6 percent in 2012:1 to $71.1 billion from $67.3 billion in 2011:1.

Corporate Income Tax

Corporate income tax revenue decreased by 4.7 percent from the same period in the prior year. Revenue for the first quarter was $10.7 billion, down from $11.2 billion in 2011:1.

STATE TAX COLLECTIONS

Total state tax revenue was $189.8 billion in the first quarter of 2012, up 4.5 percent from the $181.7 billion reported in the same quarter of 2011. At $62.3 billion, individual income tax was the single largest source of state tax revenue, up 5.1 percent from the first quarter of 2011. The second largest category of state tax revenue, general sales and gross receipts taxes, accounted for $60.3 billion, an increase of 4.3 percent from the first quarter in 2011. Corporation net income tax collections decreased by 0.3 percent in the first quarter of 2012, following a 9.0 percent increase in the first quarter of 2011.

Overall, individual income tax accounted for 32.8 percent of total state tax revenue, general sales and gross receipts taxes measured 31.8 percent, and other taxes collected accounted for 35.4 percent of total state tax revenue.

The percentage breakdown for state and local combined vs. state only tax collections can be seen in Figure 3. Property tax, a predominant tax source for local governments, totaled $114.6 billion and 35.2 percent of total state and local government taxes in the first quarter of 2012.

Total state tax revenue increased for the third consecutive quarter of year-over-year growth in the first quarter of 2012. Figure 4 shows the year-over-year change in state tax revenue. Since the 12.2 percent decline in state tax revenue the first quarter of 2009, total state revenue has continued to increase each quarter.

Figure 4. Percentage Change in Historical First Quarter Totals of State Tax Revenue: 2001–2012

Figure 5 shows the diversity in tax revenue sources that exists among the states. For example, in the first quarter of 2012, North Dakota and Wyoming’s severance taxes accounted for 59.6 percent and 44.0 percent of their total tax revenue, respectively. States like Tennessee, Florida, Washington, and South Dakota rely on general sales and gross receipts taxes with 61.3 percent, 58.5 percent, 57.5 percent, and 55.1 percent of their total tax revenue, respectively; whereas five states (Alaska, Delaware, Montana, New Hampshire, and Oregon) do not levy a general sales tax at all. In Oregon and New York, individual income taxes accounted for 66.6 percent and 58.5 percent of their total tax revenue, respectively; whereas seven states (Alaska, Florida, Nevada, South Dakota, Texas, Washington, and Wyoming) do not impose individual income taxes.

The data and technical documentation for this release can be found at <www.census.gov/govs/qtax>.

For further information on state and local government tax revenue, please contact Governments Division, U.S. Census Bureau at 866-492-0140 or by e-mail at govs.qtax@census.gov.

Note: Alaska, Hawaii, Minnesota, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin were not reported. The data shown for these states were imputed.
Figure 5.
Percentage of Total State Tax Revenue, by Type of Tax

Note: Data are sorted by general sales tax percentage.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Quarterly Summary of State and Local Government Tax Revenue.