

Death and Taxes? Not True for All Anymore

They say only two things in life are for sure: death and taxes. But what isn't so set in stone is how much of your hard earned dollars you pay for taxes. The Oregon Center for Public Policy outlines just how much – or little – certain groups of people and companies put into the collective tax pot.

The income group in Oregon that pays the highest share of their income to state and local taxes: Lowest-income taxpayers.

The income group in Oregon that pays the lowest share of their income to state and local taxes: Highest-income taxpayers.

Oregon state and local general revenue as a share of income in 1988: 15.4 percent.

Oregon state and local general revenue as a share of income in 2008: 14.9 percent.

Oregon state and local government spending as a share of income in 1988 14.7 percent.

Oregon state and local government spending as a share of

TAX FACTS THAT MATTER

Center for Public Policy

income in 2008: 15.6 percent.

Share of Oregon income taxes paid by corporations in 1973-75: 18.5 percent.

Share of Oregon income taxes corporations are projected to pay in 2011-13: 6.9 percent.

Anticipated state revenue from personal income taxes in 2011-13: \$12 billion.

Anticipated state revenue from the Oregon Lottery in 2011-13: \$1.1 billion.

Anticipated revenue from corporate income taxes in 2011-13: \$898 million.

2009 federal poverty line for a family of four: \$21,947.

Of the 42 states with income taxes, the number that taxed the income of a family of four living at the poverty line in 2009: 13.

State income tax paid in Oregon by a family of four living at the poverty line in 2009: \$200.

Oregon's rank in taxing the income of a family of four living at the poverty line in 2009: 6th highest.

The share of Oregon's total capital gains income in 2008 that went to the wealthiest 1 percent of taxpayers: 68 percent.

The cost of Governor Kitzhaber's proposal to give preferential tax treatment to income from capital gains in 2011-13: \$25

Cost during 2011-13 budget period of the income tax cut scheduled to take effect in January 2012 for the wealthiest 4 percent of Oregonians: \$134 million.

Cost during the 2011-13 budget period to increase Oregon's Earned Income Tax Credit from 6 percent of the federal credit to 9 percent: \$43.4 million.

Cost to Oregon of the home mortgage interest deduction in the

home mortgage interest deduction in the 2011-13 budget period: \$1.6 billion.

Increase in the cost of the home mortgage interest deduction from 2007-09 to 2011-13: 84 percent.

Share of Oregon taxpayers getting no benefit from the home mortgage interest deduction in 2008: 61 percent.

Cost of film tax credits sold for tax year 2010 to raise money for film subsidies: \$7.5 million.

Average profit from the purchase of 2010 film tax credits: 6.9 percent.

Share of profits from film credit purchases going to the wealthiest 5 percent of Oregon taxpayers in tax year 2008: 87 percent.

State with the lowest combined state and local business taxes as a share of the economy in 2009, according to the Council on State Taxation (COST): Oregon, tied with Delaware and North Carolina.

The income group in Oregon that pays the highest share of their income to state and local taxes: Lowest-income taxpayers

million.

Cost during 2011-13 budget period of the "accelerated" or "bonus" depreciation corporate tax cut enacted by the Oregon legislature in March 2011: \$93 million.

2007-09 budget period:

\$884.5 million.

Projected cost to Oregon of the home mortgage interest deduction in the 2009-11 budget period: \$1.3 billion.

Projected cost to Oregon of the

'Going Green:' A Real Black American Earth Day

Forty-one years ago Earth Day was established by the global community and now literally hundreds of millions of people throughout the world will celebrate Earth Day on Friday, April 22, 2011. For Black Americans and millions of people of color, Earth Day 2011 should be both a day of celebration and rededication to the struggle to free our communities from the devastating toxicity of environmental injustice. Going "green" should not be reduced to a popular fad or to something that just sounds progressive or cool.

Official theme: "Earth Day 2011: A Billion Acts of Green" encourages people everywhere to take the time to do an act of environmental service and advocacy that will contribute to improving the quality of life for all living things on earth. That is a good achievable goal worthy of our support and involvement. With all the terrible climatic changes and related severe weather consequences of global warming and environmental damage to the world's ego system, all people should take at least one day a year to assess how to make the world a better and a more healthier place to live.

A "Black American Earth Day" should be a day of solidarity with all people, but in particular with other people of color, who like Black Americans are disproportionately exposed to environmental injustices and life-threatening pollutions and toxic hazards. These dangerous problems are local, statewide, regional, national and international. In Harlem, South Central Los Angeles, Southside Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia, Detroit, Cleveland, St. Louis, New Orleans, and in just about every other place in America where we reside, we find ourselves disproportionately with high rates of asthma and other respiratory diseases, multiple forms of cancer, and other sicknesses that are directly related to harmful exposure to environmental haz-

EDUCATION SERVICES

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ards in the air that we breathe, as well as in the water and food that we consume.

Let's use Earth Day 2011 as an opportunity to raise more awareness in our communities about the importance of environmental concerns and issues. We have to connect the dots. The health of our communities is impacted by the environment of our communities. Did you know that many of the growing lists of so-called "learning disabilities" that affect too many of the children in the Black American community maybe environmentally related to exposures from lead poisoning and other toxic substances laced in many of our neighborhoods? The overall quality of life in Black America can be and should be improved if we all become more conscious and involved with understanding the importance of demanding and adhering to environmental justice.

The United Nations in 2009 established April 22 as "Mother Earth Day." The first Earth Day was in the United States back in 1970 organized by Senator Gaylord Nelson from Wisconsin. Over the years, Earth Day has grown into a worldwide observance and celebration. In the early 1980's, the Environmental Justice Movement began to be evolved, led by African Americans in North Carolina and in other states who saw the vital necessity to stand up and speak out against the growing evidence of environmental racism and injustice.

Again, a Black American Earth Day should be a day set aside for grassroots organizations and community leaders to mobilize and

organize around all the environmental issues that continue to impact the quality of life and future of our children and communities. There should, in fact, be a sense of urgency in 2011. With all the budget cutbacks at the local, state and federal levels, the last thing that we need is for African Americans to become more exposed to environmental hazards because of the lack of funding or from the cutting of budgets in the

areas of public health and environmental protection.

I am optimistic because the hip-hop community appears to be more environmentally conscious as youth activists are raising their voices in support of Earth Day activities. In the South Bronx, the birthplace of hip-hop culture, one of the most effective grassroots environmental groups is named "Sustainable South Bronx" led by young community leader, Majora

Carter. On "Greening The Ghetto," Majora Carter stated innovatively, "Say it loud, I'm black, green and proud!" We need more conscious and active leadership like Sister Carter. Let's celebrate Earth Day! Let's make it "A Black American Earth Day!"

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Week on the Web

France has vowed to **step up airstrikes in Libya** to support the cause of the rebels ... in *"Breaking News"*

A year after the **BP Gulf oil spill**, there are 3,200 wells that remain unplugged and unsupervised at the bottom of the ocean ... in *"National News"*

Win free tickets to an advance



screening for "Fast Five" ... in *"Movie Reviews"*

Illmaculate and G Force released a **free hip hop remix** of Al Green's 2008 come-back album "Lay It Down" ... in *"Music Reviews"*

The Washington State Senate has **cut teachers pay** by 3 percent ... in *"Northwest News"*

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