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## Economist: Idaho tax burden 36th, Washington 5th

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**Associated Taxpayers of Idaho kicks off its 65th annual conference Thursday morning in Boise, a traditional run-up to the Idaho legislative session**

BOISE - Idaho ranks 36th in the nation for its tax burden at all levels of government, an economist for the Tax Foundation told the Associated Taxpayers of Idaho this morning.

That's measured by the foundation's annual calculations of "Tax Freedom Day" for each state, the date on which workers theoretically have earned enough to cover their full tax burden at the federal, state and local levels.

Washington ranks 5th by the same measure, with its "Tax Freedom Day" on April 16, meaning the foundation estimates Washingtonians work 106 days to pay off their annual tax burden from all levels of government.

Tax Foundation economist Mark Robyn told the Idaho group that Idaho's date is April 3rd, which at 93 days ranks as 36th in the nation.

Nationally, the foundation sets the date at April 12, at 102 days. That national date is three days later this year than last year, but nearly two weeks earlier than it was in 2007, reflecting a lower overall tax burden comparatively.

The talk was part of the ATI's annual conference today, which also includes state legislative budget updates, a luncheon talk by Idaho Lt. Gov. Brad Little, and legislative leaders sharing their game plans for the upcoming Idaho legislative session that starts in January.

Legislative budget chief Cathy Holland-Smith told the gathering, which includes lawmakers, lobbyists, business people, state and local government officials and more, that Idaho's budget outlook "looks a lot better than it has." Lawmakers in January will face a budget-setting process that for the first time in several years promises a surplus, after the state made deep cuts during the recent recession years.