



# NEWS

## AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

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## Gov. Rowland Should Look For Less Destructive Ways to Fund the Budget

*Instead of regressive tax increases, other states have maximized resources by freeing certain markets.*

WASHINGTON – Gov. John Rowland (R) is promoting another major tax increase. After raising taxes by nearly \$1 billion over the past two years, Rowland has proposed a package of \$101 million in new taxes on tobacco, beer, wine, spirits, and newspapers.

But as the economy roars back from the recession, revenues are flowing into state treasuries nationwide. And taxpayer advocates are promoting ways to take advantage of this growth to increase revenues without raising taxes.

**“Rather than taxing the spirits industry, why not free it to grow and prosper in Connecticut?”** asked taxpayer advocate Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. **“Ancient blue law restrictions from Puritan days prohibit such activities as selling spirits on Sundays. Such restrictions are woefully outdated relative to modern shopping habits, they inconvenience consumers, and they cost the state money.”**

In today’s fast paced lifestyle, studies have shown more people do more of their shopping on Sundays only, not all week long. In fact, for the important demographic group of 35-54 year olds, 16% do their shopping on Sundays – the second-highest day of the week. Those who want to buy spirits that day must cross state lines to Connecticut’s neighbors that sell on Sundays. **The combined reduced consumption, plus lost sales to other states, costs Connecticut an estimated \$1.5-2.1 million per year in lost revenue.\***

**“Gov. Rowland seems to have an insatiable appetite for other people’s money,”** continued Norquist. **“But before he raids taxpayers’ wallets and sucks more money out of the private economy, maybe he should free up the market and let it grow naturally. Doing so will allow people more choices, and it will deliver more revenue to the state.”**

\*Policy Analysis, Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, [www.discus.org](http://www.discus.org).

*Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact Jonathan Collegio at (202) 785-0266 or by email at [jcollegio@atr.org](mailto:jcollegio@atr.org).*