# NEWS RELEASE

## New Hampshire overtakes Florida as most economically-free state, New York least-free for fifth consecutive year

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**For Immediate Release**

**TORONTO—**New Hampshire has reclaimed 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 7.93 out of 10 in this year's report, beating out Florida (2nd), which ranked 1st last year.

Economic freedom is the ability of individuals to make their own economic decisions free of undue restrictions—what to buy, where to work, whether to start a business, and so on. The *__Economic Freedom of North America__* report determines levels of economic freedom by measuring government spending, taxation and labor market restrictions using data from 2017, the latest year of available comparable data.

"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, report co-author and the Dr. Michael A. Walker Research Chair in Economic Freedom at the Fraser Institute.

Rounding out the top five freest states are Tennessee (3rd), Virginia (4th) and Texas (5th). For the fifth year in a row, New York was ranked last (50th), followed by West Virginia (49th), Alaska (48th), Vermont (47th) and Oregon (46th).

From 2003 to 2017, the average score for U.S. states in the all-government index fell from 8.23 to 7.92. Across North America, in the most-free jurisdictions, the average per capita income in 2017 was 9.2 per cent above the national average compared to 3.4 per cent below the national average in the least-free jurisdictions.

The report also includes an additional all-government ranking, which adds federal government policy to the index and includes the 50 U.S. states, 32 Mexican states and 10 Canadian provinces (New Hampshire also tops this ranking).

"Higher levels of economic freedom lead to more prosperity, greater economic growth, more investment and more jobs and opportunities," 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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