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Why is Christmas so darned expensive? Because of the 42% hidden taxes we pay

“Sneaky taxes” make politicians the Grinches who steal Christmas

WASHINGTON, DC — **Feeling a financial pinch during this holiday season?**

Maybe that’s because there’s a hidden tax of up to 72% on every Christmas present you buy, the Libertarian Party said today.

That sneaky tax burden results from the *dozens* of taxes the government imposes on *every* consumer product at *every* stage of production, distribution, and sale, says a recent study from the Washington DC-based Americans for Tax Reform.

The study found that those unseen taxes (federal, state, and local) boosted the price of a broad range of consumer goods by an average of 42% — and up to 72% for products like liquor.

“Politicians are like Santa Claus in reverse,” said Libertarian Party Chairman Steve Dasbach. “Instead of putting something under your tree, they’re taking something away. They’re grabbing 42% of every Christmas gift you’ve purchased and squandering it on wasteful government programs.”

Here’s how those hidden taxes affect your holiday:

■ **Flying in to visit your relatives?** A \$318 airline ticket would cost just \$191 if the airline didn’t have to pay 18 separate taxes, including an airline ticket tax; a jet fuel tax; a cargo shipment tax; a passenger facilities charge; federal, state, and local income taxes; payroll taxes for its employees; workmen’s compensation and unemployment compensation taxes; state and local property taxes; and business license fees.

■ **Want to save money by driving?** Guess again — a whopping 54% of gasoline prices goes to the government. That means \$1.33-a-gallon gas would cost just 61 cents without the 43 separate taxes on gasoline, including state and federal excise taxes; oil import duties; refinery taxes; pipeline taxes; Superfund taxes; and oil disposal taxes.

■ **Staying in an \$80-a-night hotel room** would cost just \$45.60 without the 15 taxes imposed on hotels, including occupancy taxes, property taxes, and food and beverage taxes.

■ **Want to celebrate Christmas with a bottle of liquor?** Thanks to the government, the average bottle costs \$9.37, rather than \$2.64, because 72% of the price of liquor is taxes.

“Politicians are the Grinches who are stealing 42% of your Christmas budget — one tax at a time,” Dasbach said. “These hidden taxes are quietly picking your pocket every time you go Christmas shopping.”

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