

CAPITOL FACTS & FIGURES

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GOVERNORS' SALARIES, 2015

The Council of State Governments has been collecting data on governors' salaries for *The Book of the States* since 1937. The average governor's salary grew more slowly during and after the Great Recession, with many states instituting a ban on cost-of-living adjustments; however, as the economic and fiscal health of states has improved, the annual increases normally seen in executive branch pay are returning to a more historically customary level.

Governors' salaries in 2015 range from a low of \$70,000 in Maine to a high of \$184,632 in Pennsylvania with an average salary of \$134,792.

- Maine Gov. Paul LePage earns the lowest gubernatorial salary at an annual rate of \$70,000, followed by Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson, who earns \$87,759 per year.
- Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf has the highest gubernatorial salary at \$190,823, followed by Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam's salary of \$184,632 per year, although Haslam returns his salary to the state.
- Governors in three states—Alabama, Florida and Tennessee—do not accept a paycheck or return their salaries to the state, while Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder and Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner both return all but \$1 of their salaries to the state.
- Several governors have taken voluntary salary reductions in recent years, including Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear, New Hampshire Gov. Maggie Hassan, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo and Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin.

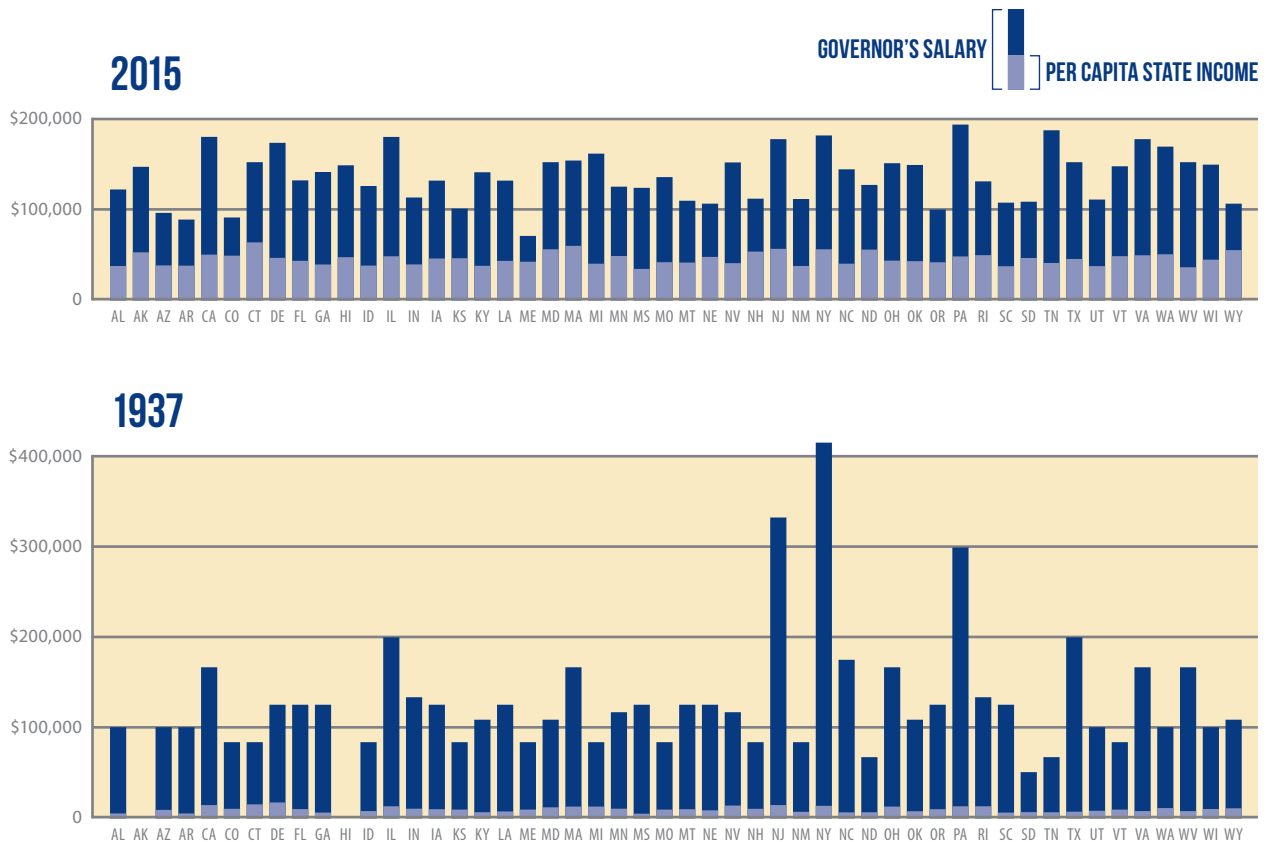
Governors' salaries have been cut in some states and increased in others during and since the recession.

- The average annual salary for all governors grew by 0.5 percent from 2014 to 2015.
- Governors in 13 states saw their salaries increase in 2015 over 2014 levels. The average salary increase for these 13 governors was \$2,431, or 1.8 percent, and ranged from a low of 0.4 percent (Alabama) to three percent (North Dakota).
- The average annual salary for governors has decreased only once during the past 10 years. In 2010, the average salary fell slightly, from \$131,115 to \$130,595, in large part because the salary for California's governor was reduced by 18 percent based on recommendations from the state's Citizens Compensation Commission. Prior to the reduction, the governor's salary was the highest in the country—\$212,179. Florida and Hawaii also cut pay for their top executive branch official in 2010.



- Although a number of states reduced governors' salaries from 2003 to 2009, those reductions were offset by increases in other states, making the average annual change for governors' salaries a 2.8 percent increase over this period.
- Since the 2010 decrease, the average governor's salary has grown more slowly than in the previous decade, increasing less than 1 percent each year. That is due, in large part, to the widespread salary freezes that halted cost-of-living adjustments for public employees during and after the recession, although states are beginning to lift those salary freezes.

GOVERNORS' SALARIES AND PER CAPITA STATE INCOME, 2015 AND 1937 (IN 2015 DOLLARS)



The average governor's salary in 2015 is very close to what it was 78 years ago when adjusted for inflation, but is quite different when compared to per capita personal income levels.

- The average salary for a governor in the 48 states was \$7,823 in 1937. When adjusted for inflation, the average salary for a governor in 1937 becomes \$129,643—just 4 percent shy of the average salary in 2015.
- In 1937, the governor of New York collected the highest salary, earning \$25,000 a year. That \$25,000 salary in 2015 dollars would be worth \$414,302—more than double what Gov. Cuomo earns today. In comparison, the governor of South Dakota earned just \$3,000 in 1937, or \$49,716 in today's dollars—less than half of Gov. Dennis Daugaard's current \$107,121 salary.
- In 1937, the average governor's salary was almost 14 times the per capita personal income of the day (total personal income divided by the population), which was \$579. That multiple varied significantly across states. For example, in Mississippi, the governor's salary was 34 times the state's per capita personal income while in Connecticut, it was only 5.8 times.
- In 2015, the average governor's salary is almost three times per capita personal income—significantly less than in 1937. The range of values for this measure has shrunk as well, ranging from a low of 1.7 times in Maine to a high of 4.5 times in Tennessee.

Source for Tables on the Following Pages: The Council of State Governments Survey, *The Book of the States: The Governors: Compensation, Staff, Travel and Residence*, 1937, 2014, 2015.

... — Not Available

Notes*:

Alabama—Gov. Robert Bentley is not accepting his salary, \$120,395, until the unemployment rate in Alabama drops.

Florida—Gov. Rick Scott does not accept a salary.

Illinois—Gov. Bruce Rauner returns all but \$1.00 of his salary.

Kentucky—Gov. Steve Beshear takes a voluntary 10 percent salary reduction.

Michigan—Gov. Rick Snyder returned all but \$1.00 of his salary.

New Hampshire—When Gov. Hassan took office, she reduced her salary to 97 percent of the previous governor's salary, in line with budget reductions she was asking agencies to make. She has not accepted a salary increase since.

New York—Gov. Andrew Cuomo voluntarily reduced his salary by 5 percent.

Tennessee—Gov. Haslam returns his salary to the state.

Vermont—Gov. Peter Shumlin took a voluntary 3 percent reduction in the annual salary set in statute.



Jennifer Burnett, Director, Fiscal and Economic Development Policy, jburnett@csg.org

2014/2015 GOVERNORS' SALARIES

| | 2014 Governor's Salary | | 2015 Governor's Salary | | |
|------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Current Dollars | Percent of National Average | Current Dollars | Percent of National Average | Percent Change from 2014 |
| Alabama* | \$119,950 | 89% | \$120,395 | 89% | 0.4% |
| Alaska | \$145,000 | 108% | \$145,000 | 108% | 0.0% |
| Arizona | \$95,000 | 71% | \$95,000 | 70% | 0.0% |
| Arkansas | \$86,890 | 65% | \$87,759 | 65% | 1.0% |
| California | \$173,987 | 130% | \$177,467 | 132% | 2.0% |
| Colorado | \$90,000 | 67% | \$90,000 | 67% | 0.0% |
| Connecticut | \$150,000 | 112% | \$150,000 | 111% | 0.0% |
| Delaware | \$171,000 | 127% | \$171,000 | 127% | 0.0% |
| Florida* | \$130,273 | 97% | \$130,273 | 97% | 0.0% |
| Georgia | \$139,339 | 104% | \$139,339 | 103% | 0.0% |
| Hawaii | \$143,748 | 107% | \$146,628 | 109% | 2.0% |
| Idaho | \$119,000 | 89% | \$121,975 | 90% | 2.5% |
| Illinois* | \$177,412 | 132% | \$177,412 | 132% | 0.0% |
| Indiana | \$111,688 | 83% | \$111,688 | 83% | 0.0% |
| Iowa | \$130,000 | 97% | \$130,000 | 96% | 0.0% |
| Kansas | \$99,636 | 74% | \$99,636 | 74% | 0.0% |
| Kentucky* | \$138,012 | 103% | \$139,056 | 103% | 0.8% |
| Louisiana | \$130,000 | 97% | \$130,000 | 96% | 0.0% |
| Maine | \$70,000 | 52% | \$70,000 | 52% | 0.0% |
| Maryland | \$150,000 | 112% | \$150,000 | 111% | 0.0% |
| Massachusetts | \$151,800 | 113% | \$151,800 | 113% | 0.0% |
| Michigan* | \$159,300 | 119% | \$159,300 | 118% | 0.0% |
| Minnesota | \$119,850 | 89% | \$123,427 | 92% | 3.0% |
| Mississippi | \$122,160 | 91% | \$122,160 | 91% | 0.0% |
| Missouri | \$133,821 | 100% | \$133,821 | 99% | 0.0% |
| Montana | \$108,167 | 81% | \$108,167 | 80% | 0.0% |
| Nebraska | \$105,000 | 78% | \$105,000 | 78% | 0.0% |
| Nevada | \$149,730 | 112% | \$149,730 | 111% | 0.0% |
| New Hampshire* | \$110,420 | 82% | \$110,420 | 82% | 0.0% |
| New Jersey | \$175,000 | 130% | \$175,000 | 130% | 0.0% |
| New Mexico | \$110,000 | 82% | \$110,000 | 82% | 0.0% |
| New York* | \$179,000 | 133% | \$179,000 | 133% | 0.0% |
| North Carolina | \$141,265 | 105% | \$142,265 | 106% | 0.7% |
| North Dakota | \$121,679 | 91% | \$125,330 | 93% | 3.0% |
| Ohio | \$148,886 | 111% | \$148,886 | 110% | 0.0% |
| Oklahoma | \$147,000 | 110% | \$147,000 | 109% | 0.0% |
| Oregon | \$98,600 | 73% | \$98,600 | 73% | 0.0% |
| Pennsylvania | \$187,818 | 140% | \$190,823 | 142% | 1.6% |
| Rhode Island | \$129,210 | 96% | \$129,210 | 96% | 0.0% |
| South Carolina | \$106,078 | 79% | \$106,078 | 79% | 0.0% |
| South Dakota | \$104,002 | 78% | \$107,121 | 79% | 3.0% |
| Tennessee* | \$181,980 | 136% | \$184,632 | 137% | 1.5% |
| Texas | \$150,000 | 112% | \$150,000 | 111% | 0.0% |
| Utah | \$109,470 | 82% | \$109,470 | 81% | 0.0% |
| Vermont* | \$145,538 | 108% | \$145,538 | 108% | 0.0% |
| Virginia | \$175,000 | 130% | \$175,000 | 130% | 0.0% |
| Washington | \$166,891 | 124% | \$166,891 | 124% | 0.0% |
| West Virginia | \$150,000 | 112% | \$150,000 | 111% | 0.0% |
| Wisconsin | \$144,423 | 108% | \$147,328 | 109% | 2.0% |
| Wyoming | \$105,000 | 78% | \$105,000 | 78% | 0.0% |
| 50-state average | \$134,160 | ... | \$134,793 | ... | 0.5% |

GOVERNORS' SALARIES: 1937 VERSUS 2015

| | Governor's Salary (in 2015 dollars) | | | Percent of National Average | | Per Capita Personal Income As Percent of Salary | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------------------|------|---|------|
| | 1937 | 2015 | Difference | 1937 | 2015 | 1937 | 2015 |
| Alabama* | \$99,432 | \$120,395 | \$20,963 | 77% | 89% | 4% | 31% |
| Alaska | ... | \$145,000 | ... | ... | 108% | ... | 36% |
| Arizona | \$99,432 | \$95,000 | -\$4,432 | 77% | 70% | 8% | 40% |
| Arkansas | \$99,432 | \$87,759 | -\$11,673 | 77% | 65% | 4% | 43% |
| California | \$165,721 | \$177,467 | \$11,746 | 128% | 132% | 8% | 28% |
| Colorado | \$82,860 | \$90,000 | \$7,140 | 64% | 67% | 11% | 54% |
| Connecticut | \$82,860 | \$150,000 | \$67,140 | 64% | 111% | 17% | 42% |
| Delaware | \$124,291 | \$171,000 | \$46,709 | 96% | 127% | 13% | 27% |
| Florida* | \$124,291 | \$130,273 | \$5,982 | 96% | 97% | 7% | 33% |
| Georgia | \$124,291 | \$139,339 | \$15,048 | 96% | 103% | 4% | 28% |
| Hawaii | ... | \$146,628 | ... | ... | 109% | ... | 32% |
| Idaho | \$82,860 | \$121,975 | \$39,115 | 64% | 90% | 8% | 31% |
| Illinois* | \$198,865 | \$177,412 | -\$21,453 | 153% | 132% | 6% | 27% |
| Indiana | \$132,577 | \$111,688 | -\$20,889 | 102% | 83% | 7% | 35% |
| Iowa | \$124,291 | \$130,000 | \$5,709 | 96% | 96% | 7% | 35% |
| Kansas | \$82,860 | \$99,636 | \$16,776 | 64% | 74% | 9% | 46% |
| Kentucky* | \$107,719 | \$139,056 | \$31,337 | 83% | 103% | 5% | 27% |
| Louisiana | \$124,291 | \$130,000 | \$5,709 | 96% | 96% | 5% | 33% |
| Maine | \$82,860 | \$70,000 | -\$12,860 | 64% | 52% | 10% | 60% |
| Maryland | \$107,719 | \$150,000 | \$42,281 | 83% | 111% | 10% | 37% |
| Massachusetts | \$165,721 | \$151,800 | -\$13,921 | 128% | 113% | 7% | 39% |
| Michigan* | \$82,860 | \$159,300 | \$76,440 | 64% | 118% | 14% | 25% |
| Minnesota | \$116,005 | \$123,427 | \$7,422 | 89% | 92% | 8% | 39% |
| Mississippi | \$124,291 | \$122,160 | -\$2,131 | 96% | 91% | 3% | 28% |
| Missouri | \$82,860 | \$133,821 | \$50,961 | 64% | 99% | 10% | 31% |
| Montana | \$124,291 | \$108,167 | -\$16,124 | 96% | 80% | 7% | 38% |
| Nebraska | \$124,291 | \$105,000 | -\$19,291 | 96% | 78% | 6% | 45% |
| Nevada | \$116,005 | \$149,730 | \$33,725 | 89% | 111% | 11% | 27% |
| New Hampshire* | \$82,860 | \$110,420 | \$27,560 | 64% | 82% | 11% | 48% |
| New Jersey | \$331,442 | \$175,000 | -\$156,442 | 256% | 130% | 4% | 32% |
| New Mexico | \$82,860 | \$110,000 | \$27,140 | 64% | 82% | 7% | 34% |
| New York* | \$414,302 | \$179,000 | -\$235,302 | 320% | 133% | 3% | 31% |
| North Carolina | \$174,007 | \$142,265 | -\$31,742 | 134% | 106% | 3% | 28% |
| North Dakota | \$66,288 | \$125,330 | \$59,042 | 51% | 93% | 8% | 44% |
| Ohio | \$165,721 | \$148,886 | -\$16,835 | 128% | 110% | 7% | 29% |
| Oklahoma | \$107,719 | \$147,000 | \$39,281 | 83% | 109% | 6% | 29% |
| Oregon | \$124,291 | \$98,600 | -\$25,691 | 96% | 73% | 7% | 42% |
| Pennsylvania | \$298,297 | \$190,823 | -\$107,474 | 230% | 142% | 4% | 25% |
| Rhode Island | \$132,577 | \$129,210 | -\$3,367 | 102% | 96% | 9% | 38% |
| South Carolina | \$124,291 | \$106,078 | -\$18,213 | 96% | 79% | 4% | 35% |
| South Dakota | \$49,716 | \$107,121 | \$57,405 | 38% | 79% | 11% | 43% |
| Tennessee* | \$66,288 | \$184,632 | \$118,344 | 51% | 137% | 8% | 22% |
| Texas | \$198,865 | \$150,000 | -\$48,865 | 153% | 111% | 3% | 30% |
| Utah | \$99,432 | \$109,470 | \$10,038 | 77% | 81% | 7% | 34% |
| Vermont* | \$82,860 | \$145,538 | \$62,678 | 64% | 108% | 10% | 33% |
| Virginia | \$165,721 | \$175,000 | \$9,279 | 128% | 130% | 4% | 28% |
| Washington | \$99,432 | \$166,891 | \$67,459 | 77% | 124% | 10% | 30% |
| West Virginia | \$165,721 | \$150,000 | -\$15,721 | 128% | 111% | 4% | 24% |
| Wisconsin | \$99,432 | \$147,328 | \$47,896 | 77% | 109% | 9% | 30% |
| Wyoming | \$107,719 | \$105,000 | -\$2,719 | 83% | 78% | 9% | 52% |
| 50-state average | \$129,643 | \$134,793 | \$5,150 | ... | ... | 7% | 34% |