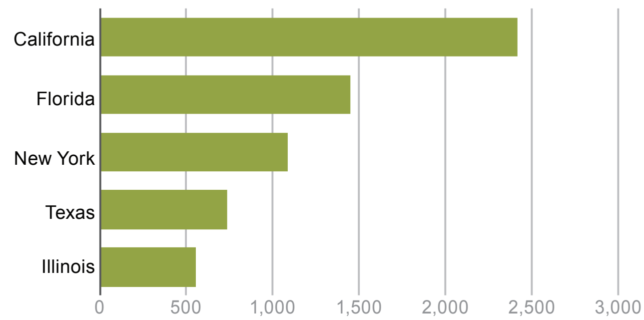
Estate Tax Returns Filed for Wealthy Decedents, 2007–2016

The Federal estate tax is a tax on the transfer property at death. It is applied to estates for which at-death gross assets, the "gross estate," exceed the filing threshold. Estate tax returns are due 9 months from the date of death and most are filed in the following calendar year. The filing threshold for Filing Year 2015 was $5.43 million. Charitable bequests and marital transfers can be taken as deductions when calculating estate tax liability.

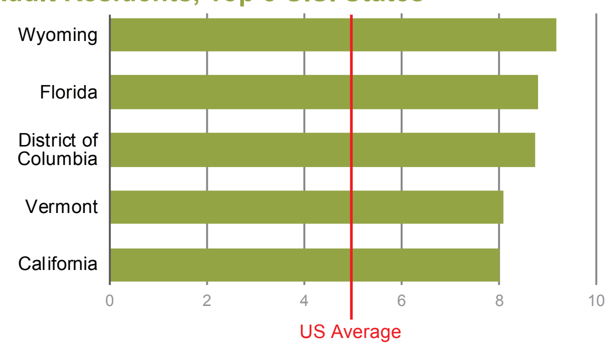
Highlights of the Data

- The number of estate tax returns declined over 67 percent from about 38,000 in 2007 to 12,411 in 2016 primarily due to the increase in the filing threshold from $2.0 million in 2007 to $5.45 million in 2016.
- In 2016, the total net estate tax reported on all estate tax returns filed for the year was nearly $18.3 billion.
- California had the highest number of estate tax returns filed in 2015, followed by Florida, New York, Texas, and Illinois.
- Looking at the number of estate tax returns filed as a percentage of the adult population (ages 18 and over), the top five States were the Wyoming, Florida, District of Columbia, Vermont, and California.
- Stock and real estate made up over half of all estate tax decedents' asset holdings in 2016.
- Estate tax decedents with total assets of $20 million or more held a greater share of their portfolio in stocks (over 44 percent) and lesser shares in real estate and retirement assets than decedents in other total asset categories.

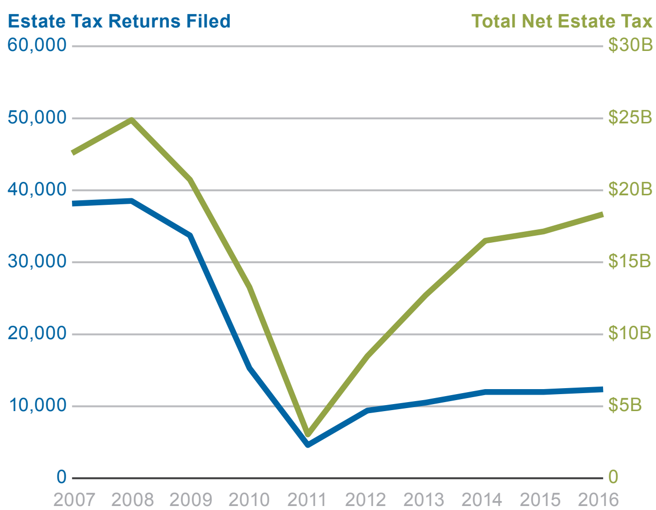
Number of Estate Tax Returns Filed in 2016, Top 5 U.S. States



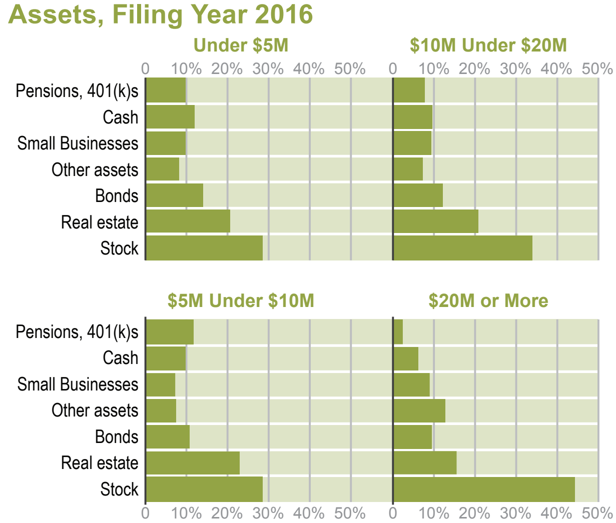
Estate Tax Returns Filed in 2016 Per 100,000 Adult Residents, Top 5 U.S. States



Estate Tax Returns Filed and Total Net Estate Tax, 2007–2016



Portfolio Composition of Estates, by Size of Total Assets, Filing Year 2016



Statistics of Income

www.irs.gov/statistics

www.irs.gov/statistics/soi-tax-stats-estate-tax-statistics

IRS

Individual
Tax Statistics