



## MIDWEST RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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For Immediate Release

SUMMARY: Economist develops method to compare social welfare in 50 states; indicates California and Pacific Coast region lead the nation.

KANSAS CITY -- California's image of where the "good life" is today got some added support from a research economist who has developed a method of comparing how well states fulfill nine domestic goals set by a presidential commission.

Dr. John O. Wilson of Midwest Research Institute in Kansas City gave the No. 1 individual rank to California, and also ranked the Pacific region of Alaska, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington and California first.

While the ranking of California might be expected -- because of its phenomenal growth, educational system, defense and research industries -- the No. 2 ranking of Minnesota is more surprising.

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Minnesota ranked among the top five states in four of the nine individual goal areas. It provides high quality medical services in the private sector; its children's health and welfare program is among the best, and it leads the country with its old age public assistance program, said Dr. Wilson.

Other states ranked in the first ten are, according to rank, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Washington, Colorado, New York, Oregon, Wisconsin, and Iowa.

Wilson said he measured the contributions of both the public and private sectors of the economy, as well as social and political attributes, to determine the extent of what economists call "social welfare."

#### METHOD DEFINED

"Social welfare is difficult to define, but I have tried to bridge the gap between theoreticians and the usual economic statistics we see -- even though there is a need for more comparative data," he said.

Wilson accepted the report of the Eisenhower Commission on National Goals as a starting point to set forth the social welfare function.

He selected nine commission goals concerning the status of the individual, individual equality, the democratic process, education, economic growth, technological change, agriculture, living conditions, and health and welfare.

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To measure a state's progress toward achieving these goals, Wilson came up with a total of 91 indicators. Each state was ranked within each goal area.

The final ranking, what Wilson terms his social-economic-political index, results from averaging a state's rank in each goal area.

#### GOALS EXPLAINED

Wilson defined the nine goals he selected as follows:

- \* Status of the individual -- enhancing dignity, promoting maximum development of capabilities, widening the opportunities for individual choice.
- \* Individual equality -- efforts to eliminate discrimination on the basis of race, sex, and religion.
- \* Democratic process -- building an informed and involved citizenry, improving the quality of public administration, increasing collaboration and the sharing of power among all levels of government.
- \* Education -- improving the quality and quantity of primary, secondary, higher and vocational education and training.

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\* Economic growth -- the quantity and quality of growth, including capital investment in the public sector, improved standard of living, and training for a more capable and flexible work force.

\* Technological change -- the role of research and the availability of manpower and facilities to maintain economic growth and improve living conditions.

\* Agriculture -- seeking an efficient sized farm sector with a fair return to the farmer; helping excess agricultural workers relocate in more productive areas.

\* Living conditions -- the alleviation of general poverty and decayed conditions in the city.

#### SELECTING INDICATORS

Wilson admitted that he had difficulty selecting specific indicators by which to evaluate each state's performance toward achieving the nine goals, because there is less data on the social and political conditions than there is on economic conditions.

He said that the goal of individual equality, for example, was interpreted to contain the major objectives of eliminating discrimination in the areas of justice, voting and office holding, access to education and employment, home ownership and community participation.

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Data used to rank the states in this goal category considered:

- \* Existence of anti-discrimination laws concerning public accommodations, education, employment and open housing, along with the degree of enforcement.
- \* Number of civil rights and police brutality cases received by the U.S. Justice department.
- \* Segregation practices in the state national guard.
- \* Percent of eligible Negroes actually registered to vote.
- \* Percent of population voting in 1964 presidential election.
- \* Percent of Negro elementary students in schools which are at least 90 percent Negro.

#### SOURCES LISTED

Wilson said he got most of the data for the 91 indicators from official government publications or agencies. Some data also was received from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and his own analysis of state taxation policies.

He cautioned that his ranking of states is an ordinal measure of the relative performance of each state and not a measure of the specific differences. The differences between two states ranked third and fourth could be slight.

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REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN COMPARATIVE RANKINGS

<u>Region</u>	<u>Final S-E-P Ranking</u>	<u>The Status of the Individual</u>	<u>Individual Equality</u>	<u>The Democratic Process</u>	<u>Educa- tion</u>	<u>Economic Growth</u>	<u>Techno- logical Change</u>	<u>Agricul- ture</u>	<u>Living Conditions</u>	<u>Health and Welfare</u>
Pacific	1	2	3	1	1	2	5	2.5	2	4
Middle Atlantic	2	1	4	2	7	5	1	8	1	2
East North Central	3	3	5	4	3	1	2	6	4	6
New England	4	4	1	3	5	6	8	7	3	1
Mountain	5	6	6	5	2	8	9	1	5	7
West North Central	6	5	2	6	4	4	7	2.5	6	3
South Atlantic	7	7	7	7	8	3	4	5	7	5
West South Central	8	8	9	8	6	9	3	4	9	8
East South Central	9	9	8	9	9	7	6	9	8	9

THE S-E-P INDEX COMPARATIVE RANKING OF INDIVIDUAL STATES

<u>Region</u>	<u>Final S-E-P Ranking</u>	<u>Status of the Individual</u>	<u>Equality</u>	<u>The Democratic Process</u>	<u>Educa- tion</u>	<u>Economic Growth</u>	<u>Tech- nology Change</u>	<u>Agricul- ture</u>	<u>Living Conditions</u>	<u>Health and Welfare</u>
California	1	3	17	6	4	1	1	1	3	14
Minnesota	2	10	1	4	9	3	11.5	19	10	1
Connecticut	3	2	6	2	6	13	14	16	1	9
Massachusetts	4	1	3	1	10	19	4	25.5	9	12
Washington	5	6	5	19	2	7	13	10	12	20
Colorado	6	14	14	10	3	15	19	7.5	24	6
New York	7	4	20	15	15	16	2	32	2	2
Oregon	8	7	8	12	1	8.5	32	29	11	11
Wisconsin	9	8	26	7	18	6	11.5	25.5	22	7
Iowa	10	13	2	26.5	7	11	26	6	29	13
Illinois	11	9	27	14	19	8.5	10	17	14	21
Delaware	12	20	30	31	16	4	29	7.5	8	3
New Jersey	13	11	9	8	35.5	33	9	24	4	24
Hawaii	14	21	18	3	22	10	40	15	7	27
Rhode Island	15	5	4	13	24	34	37	39	6	4
Michigan	16	12	13	20	27	2	8	46	13	41
Utah	17.5	25	36	5	5	27	22	22	20	40
Ohio	17.5	16	19	23	32	20	6	42	17	30
North Dakota	19	22	11	34	25	21	41	12	33	8
Nevada	20	23	37	9	30	24	44	4	5	35
Pennsylvania	21	18	23	17	37.5	37.5	5	48	16	16
Maryland	22	31	39	33	40	5	15	36	21	5
Arizona	23	29.5	40	21	8	29	28	2	31	38
Wyoming	24	17	15	35	11	43	46	5	28	32
Indiana	25.5	27	25	28	17	12	17	30.5	34	47
Kansas	25.5	19	24	32	12	27	31	20	38.5	34
Vermont	27	32.5	28	16	23	30	45	30.5	25	10

THE S-E-P INDEX COMPARATIVE RANKING OF INDIVIDUAL STATES (Concluded)

<u>Region</u>	<u>Final S-E-P Ranking</u>	<u>Status of the Individual</u>	<u>Equality</u>	<u>The Democratic Process</u>	<u>Educa- tion</u>	<u>Economic Growth</u>	<u>Tech- nology Change</u>	<u>Agricul- ture</u>	<u>Living Conditions</u>	<u>Health and Welfare</u>
Idaho	28	28	21	22	26	31.5	43	9	18	44.5
New Hampshire	29	15	7	30	34	35.5	42	49	19	22
Florida	30	39	44	26.5	37.5	18	7	3	37	42
Montana	31	24	31	24	28	47	47	13	23	19
Nebraska	32	29.5	22	38	29	31.5	39	14	40	29
Oklahoma	33	32.5	38	39	13	45	23	23	43	17
Alaska	34	26	29	18	21	41.5	49	40	26	25
Virginia	35	43	42	11	41	14	16	41	42	26
Texas	36	41	45	37	20	22	3	11	50	49
South Dakota	37	34	10	42	35.5	48	48	18	35	18
New Mexico	38	37	35	29	14	46	36	21	32	43
Maine	39	36	12	25	47	49	50	43	15	23
North Carolina	40	45	41	40	33	28	18	33	44	33
Missouri	41	38	32	41	39	37.5	20	44	36	28
Tennessee	42	44	34	36	42	23	22	47	38.5	37
West Virginia	43	35	16	48	50	50	34	50	30	15
Georgia	44	48	48	44	44	17	24	28	45	39
Louisiana	45	40	46	43	31	41.5	25	35	49	31
Kentucky	46	42	33	50	48	26	30	45	27	46
Arkansas	47	46	43	47	43	44	35	27	41	36
Alabama	48	47	50	46	46	39.5	21	38	47	44.5
South Carolina	49	49	47	45	49	39.5	33	34	48	50
Mississippi	50	50	49	49	45	35.5	38	37	46	48

(Note to Editor: The final S-E-P Ranking reflects the average of the nine goal areas.)