

# TRUTH IN ACCOUNTING

[www.truthinaccounting.org](http://www.truthinaccounting.org)



TRUTHFUL

TIMELY

TRANSPARENT

TIA

*“For anyone who cares about the finances of government,  
Truth in Accounting is the indispensable resource and advocate.  
For those who don’t care, they are in for repeated nasty surprises.”*

–Ed Bachrach, Chairman Center for Pension Integrity



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# WHO WE ARE

## OUR MISSION

At Truth in Accounting (TIA), we educate and empower citizens with understandable, reliable, and transparent government financial information.

## ABOUT

Founded in 2002, Truth in Accounting believes truthful accounting is the key for citizens, legislators, and media outlets to clearly understand the truth about government finances. To be knowledgeable participants in their governments' financial decisions, citizens need accurate and complete financial information. Our work has focused on encouraging public entities to produce financial reports that are comprehensive, clear, and transparent; and informing the public of the importance of truthful accounting practices.

## CEO & FOUNDER

Sheila A. Weinberg, CPA, is the founder and CEO of Truth in Accounting. Since 2002, Sheila has led Truth in Accounting's research initiatives, which include "The Truth about Balanced Budgets: a Fifty State Study," the "Financial State of the States Project," and the "Financial State of the Union." Because of her expertise in governmental budgeting and accounting, Sheila has testified before the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB), the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB), and numerous state legislative hearings on matters of proper government accounting practices.



# TIA'S METHODOLOGY

## Methodology Lesson

We start with the state financial report:

take available assets  
(excluding buildings, roads, land)



(-) subtract total bills  
(including retirement liabilities\*)



\$ Needed to pay bills

then...

\$ Needed  
to pay bills ÷ taxpayers

= TAXPAYER BURDEN!

The Illustration above represents our approach to determine an individual's share of their state debt.  
\*This number is calculated by adding the reported Net Pension Obligation and Net Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB). The bulk of these liabilities are hidden in the underlying financial reports.

# CEO IN THE MEDIA

## SHEILA WEINBERG

*“Sheila Weinberg has the rare gift of making the boring interesting and financial gobbledygook easily understandable. Truth in Accounting is doing the kind of work that should be blasted from the mountain tops. I quote their work often because the work behind it is simply unimpeachable.”*

-Mandy Connell, 630 KHOW Denver, 840 WHAS Louisville

### ABC 7 NEWS



Sheila discussed why Chicago's poor pension funding has led to difficulty when borrowing money. Completing a study of 126 villages surrounding Chicago, TIA revealed that 102 villages face funding problems in regard to pensions.

### THE HILL



Sheila's op-ed, "The Truth about Federal Accounting Practices" broke down exactly how TIA concluded that the federal government's debt is far larger than the number it reports.

# BILL'S BLOG

## TOPICS COVERED

Bill's Blog covers topics ranging from moral hazard to the defense budget, and everything in between. Bill's posts react to trends and current events in the government finances and accounting realm.

*“Bill does an extraordinary job and has a profound understanding of the issues facing the marketplace. His blog is very analytical and quantitative.”*

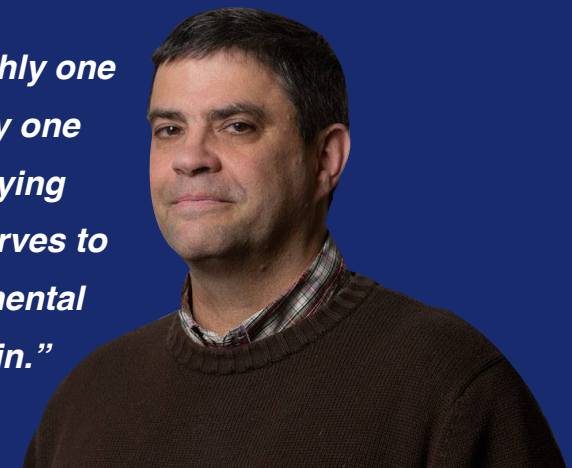
-Allan R. Ettinger, Senior Vice President  
Morgan Stanley Wealth Management

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Inspire citizens to care about government finances
2. Highlight important issues and opportunities for improvement
3. Illuminate historical and legal foundations for securing accountability

*“The average worker spends roughly one third of their day at work. Roughly one third of their pay is devoted to paying taxes. The American worker deserves to know the integrity of the governmental institutions we all work to maintain.”*

Bill Bergman  
TIA Director of Research





# TIA IN THE MEDIA

January 2015 - June 2015

*"Truth in Accounting is a go-to resource for Reboot Illinois. We rely on its expertise to help us shine a light on Illinois budgeting and spending and to put it into meaningful context for our growing audience. Truth in Accounting's State Data Lab is a terrific resource for anyone who is concerned about public debt, taxes and fees. It's one of the most useful and user friendly resources we regularly use."*

—Madeleine Doubek,  
Chief Operating Officer  
Reboot Illinois

## AMERICAN BANKER



TIA's Director of Research, Bill Bergman offers his riveting perspective on banking ethics and the Federal Reserve's ability to set ethical standards.

## HUFFINGTON POST



TIA's report featured this year's sinkhole states and how the taxpayers are affected. A sinkhole state does not have enough money to pay its bills.

## GOVERNING



TIA Founder and CEO Sheila Weinberg spoke on the necessity for state governments to report their true pension liability. Due to GASB 68, governments will have to report their true pension debt.

## BLOOMBERG BUSINESS



TIA received credit for its insight into New Mexico's poor accounting habits. New Mexico failed to account for \$100 million, and flunked its most recent audit.

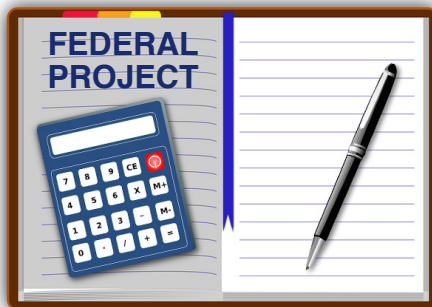
# NEWS FEATURES

TIA has been featured in the following newspapers and journals:



# TIA'S 660 REPORTS

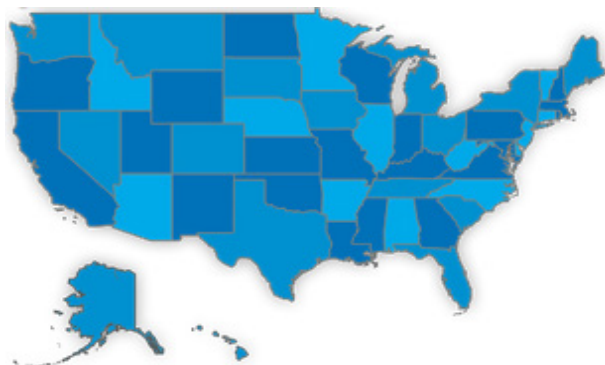
## FEDERAL



**10** Reports Released

Our Federal Project explores various aspects of government financial reporting.

## STATE



**50** State Finances Analyzed

TIA analyzes the financial status of each state government as their comprehensive annual financial report is released. Our 2014 financial data analysis has been completed.

## LOCAL



**600** Municipalities Analyzed

TIA analyzes the financial condition of local governments, cities, tax districts, and school districts.

# STATE DATA LAB

TIA's StateDataLab (SDL) allows you to take a customized look at your state's situation.

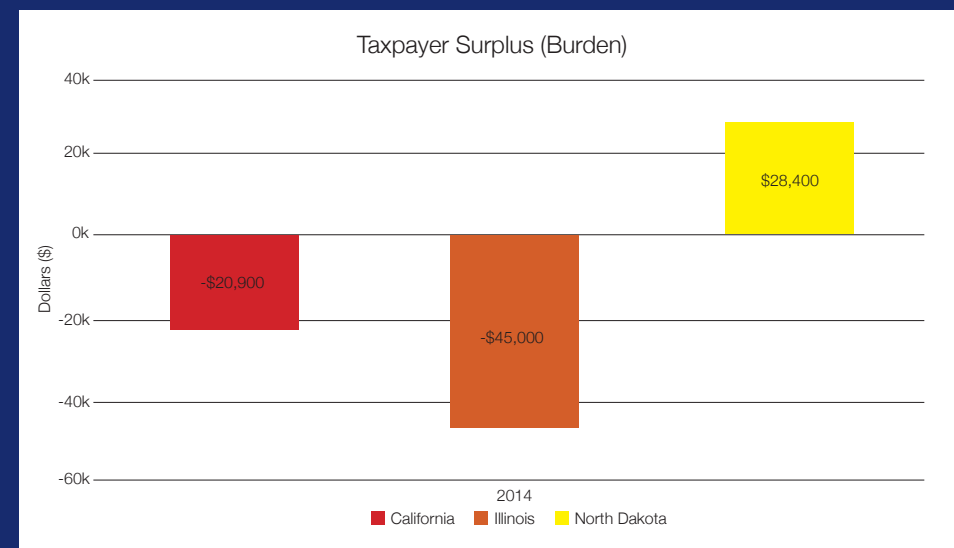
By simply visiting StateDataLab.org, you can easily create your own graph illustrating the data you need. Here's how:

In the top left corner, click on "Create Your Own Chart."



You are prompted to "Select Multiple States" or "Select Multiple Data Points." You want as much information as possible on Illinois, so you select multiple data points.

After selecting your data points and state, you will select the years you want to examine. Finally, select "Generate Chart," and a chart with your specified data is created.



This chart can be printed, shared, and modified directly on our site.

# SDL'S DATA

State Data Lab offers a vast number of unique data points per state. An unlimited number of comparisons can be created by simply selecting from the data points illustrated here:



CREATE YOUR OWN CHART



DATA DOWNLOAD



CHART OF THE DAY

SUPPORT STATE DATA LAB

DONATE NOW



STATE DATA LAB

A Project of Truth in Accounting

Like 2.7k

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YouTube

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA	STATE FINANCIAL DATA	ECONOMIC DATA	TIA DATA
Population Population Population Growth for Preceding Decade Population Growth for Preceding Decade - Rank United Van Lines % Outbound Shipments United Van Lines % Outbound Shipments - Rank Net Adjusted Gross Income Migration Net Adjusted Gross Income Migration Per Capita Female Percentage of Population Overall Health Ranking % of Population 44 and Under % of Population Ages 65+ % of Population Ages 45-64 In Migration by State 20-29	Revenue - CAFR Revenue Categories - Income Taxes Revenue Categories - Investment Earnings Revenue Categories - Other Revenue Categories - Sales, Use and Other Taxes Revenue Categories - Total Revenue Expenses - CAFR Expense Categories - Education Expense Categories - Health and Human Ser. Expense Categories - Interest Expense Categories - Other Expense Categories - Sales, Use and Other Expense Categories - Total Revenue Net Expenses - CAFR Net Expense Categories - Education Net Expense Categories - Health and Human Ser. Net Expense Categories - Interest Net Expense Categories - Other Net Expense Categories - Unemployment Net Expense Categories - Total Net Expenses Liabilities/Net Assets/Other - CAFR Total CAFR Liabilities Total Long-term Liabilities CAFR Liabilities/GDP Net Revenue US Census Bureau - State Finances Intergovernmental Expenditures Intergovernmental Expenditures (chained 2005) Intergovernmental Revenue Intergovernmental Revenue (chained 2005) Total Expenditures (chained 2005) Total Revenue Total Revenue (chained 2005) Capital Outlays Capital Outlays (chained 2005) Cash & Securities Cash & Securities (chained 2005) Debt - End of Year Debt - End of Year (chained 2005) Interest on Debt Interest on Debt (chained 2005) Taxes Sales Tax Collections per capita Combined Sales Tax Rate Estimate Sales Tax Revenue - Percent of General Revenue	Employment Unemployment Rate Minimum Wage Total Nonfarm Payroll Employment Oregon Workers' Compensation: Premium Rate Ranking Total State and Local Government: Employment Public Sector Compensation Bracket Income/GDP/Aggregates Nominal GDP Nominal GDP - Private Nominal GDP - Private Share of State Real GDP Real GDP - Private Real GDP - Private Share of State GDP Personal Income per Capita Total Wage and Salary Disbursements Bankruptcy Filings - Total Bankruptcy Filings - Business Bankruptcy Filings - Non-business ALEC Economic Outlook Ranking TICAS Average Student Loan Debt TICAS Proportion of College Students: Graduating With Debt Average Electricity Rate for All Sectors Median Household Income Real Median Household Income Bottom Individual Income Tax Rate Percent Top Individual Income Tax Rate The Real Value of \$100 Nominal GDP - Government Nominal GDP - Government Share of State Real GDP - Government Real GDP - Government Share of State Housing Existing Home Sales Building Permits - Single-Family Building Permits - Total FHFA Purchase-Only House Price Index Building Permits - Single-Family: 2005=1.0 Zillow Rent Index Organized Labor Percent of Employees Member of Union Percent of Employees Covered by: Collective Bargaining Agreements	Assets Reported Assets Assets Restricted by Law or Contract Capital Assets Assets Available to Pay Bills Debt Related to Capital Assets Retirement Liabilities Total Reported Retirement Liabilities Total Unfunded Retirement-Benefits Due Retirement Liabilities-Not Clearly Disclosed Total Unfunded Retirement-Benefits Due Total Reported Retirement Liabilities Taxpayer Burden Money Needed Taxpayer Burden Reported Assets

Medicaid Spending

Identity Theft

Lawyers per 10,000

Residents

Ballotpedia: Quality of Life

Total Reported Retirement Liabilities

Taxpayer Burden

Money Needed

Taxpayer Burden

Reported Assets

# USING SDL'S DATA

State Data Lab offers a vast number of data points with unlimited comparisons. Below is an example of two such comparisons:

## COMPARISON 1:

### Taxpayer Burden vs. Median Household Income

You can see how your state's "Taxpayer Burden" stacks up to median household income and how that relates to a specific year.

## COMPARISON 2:

### Migration Patterns vs. Economic Growth

You can track state migration patterns since 1978, and compare that to state economic growth, government finances, and other factors.



*"Truth in Accounting plays a vital role in clarifying and making public the real costs of government across the country. Through its State Data Lab project, leaders from the corporate and civic sectors, elected officials, journalists and all citizens can see and understand the true financial condition of their states and municipalities."*

-Don Cooke  
Senior Vice President  
McCormick Foundation



# MORNING CALL



Educating and empowering citizens with understandable, reliable, and transparent governmental financial information.



FORWARD TO  
A FRIEND

**DONATE**

TRUTH IN ACCOUNTING ORIGINAL CONTENT

**Morning Call is Truth in Accounting's daily newsletter that educates and empowers citizens with current and reliable news coverage of government budget and financial information.**

TOP THREE READS

*"Morning Call is a Must Read every morning!"*

**–Mike Keiser, Co-Founder of Recycled Paper Greetings  
Founder of Bandon Dunes Golf Course**

*"I look forward to the Morning Call as an invaluable resource that digests and creates links to the various foibles of state and local governments. It constantly sheds light on the machinations that politicians go through to avoid dealing with the fairly simple accounting problem that they spend more than is collected. A wonderful tool for investors seeking the truth behind government credit ratings."*

**–Michael Steinberg, Broker at LaSalle St. Securities, LLC**

*"I read Morning Call's headlines first thing every day and then go back and read the stories in depth. The stories are absolutely indispensable to my understanding of financial problems in Chicago and the world. I may not agree with all of them, but I MUST read them."*

**–Ann M. Lousin**

**Professor of Law John Marshall Law School  
Edward T. and Noble W. Lee Chair in Constitutional Law**

# HOW YOU CAN S U P P O R T

## 4 EASY WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT TIA's CAUSE:

1. **Subscribe to TIA's daily newsletter, the MORNING CALL.**  
**Sign up today and share with your friends, family, and colleagues!**
2. **Follow us on SOCIAL MEDIA (Twitter, Facebook, Youtube, LinkedIn)**  
**and help spread our message by sharing with your friends, family, and colleagues.**  
**Follow us today!**
3. **Read our FINANCIAL STATE OF THE STATES REPORT, to educate and empower yourself about your home state's financial health.**  
**Download it via StateDataLab.org!**
4. **DONATE and JOIN our growing team of TIA friends who provide vital financial support. With YOUR SUPPORT, we can continue to provide this much-needed TRUTHFUL, TIMELY, and TRANSPARENT government information.**

**To help prevent the city of Chicago, the state of Illinois, and the entire United States from following in Detroit and Greece's downfall, we must provide TRUTHFUL, TIMELY, and TRANSPARENT financial government information.**



# TIA'S BOARD

## CHAIRMAN

William Obenshain

## BOARD MEMBERS

Donald Adler	Rosanne Dineen
Rick Jasculca	Peter Karahalios
Brian Lance Kasal	John Kayser
Vince Kolber	Phil Lumpkin
Dawn Miller	Cheryl Red
Kevin Rochford	Jeff Rubenstein
Terry Savage	Kevin Edward White
Sheila Weinberg	Thomas Wright

## CHAIRMAN EMERITUS

Roger Nelson

## ACADEMIC ADVISOR

Dr. Sridhar Ramamoorti

## BOARD ADVISORS

Dennis Chookaszian      Mitch Feiger  
David Walker



**Truth in Accounting is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to educate and empower citizens with understandable, reliable, and transparent government financial information.**

**Our vision is to have a government that delivers truthful, timely, and transparent financial information to citizens. To make the best financial decisions, our country needs accurate financial reporting. We will not stop fighting until all our government institutions follow accounting practices similar to those imposed upon the private sector.**

The logo features a bright yellow circle in the bottom right corner, with the letters 'TIA' in dark blue. Five orange rays of varying lengths extend from the circle towards the top left. Three of these rays contain the words 'TRUTHFUL', 'TIMELY', and 'TRANSPARENT' in dark blue, uppercase letters, arranged diagonally from top to bottom.

TRUTHFUL

TIMELY

TRANSPARENT

TIA