



TAXPAYERS ON THE HOOK

City Combined Taxpayer Burden™ Report

May 2020 | truthinaccounting.org

Truth in Accounting has released a new analysis of the 10 most populous U.S. cities that includes their largest underlying government units.

Most municipalities do not include in their annual financial reports the finances of large, underlying government units that city taxpayers are also responsible for, such as schools districts, and transit and housing authorities. New York City is the exception of the 10 largest cities.

This report takes into account these underlying government entities and provides residents and taxpayers in these cities with a more accurate and holistic view of their respective city's finances. When the unfunded debt of these underlying government units is combined with the county, municipal, and state debt, city taxpayers are on the hook for much more than they think.

For example, our Financial State of the Cities report released earlier this year found that Chicago ranked No. 74 out of the 75 most populous U.S. cities with a Taxpayer Burden of \$37,100, which is each taxpayer's share of municipal debt. Only New York City fared worse with a Taxpayer Burden of \$63,100.

However, when you combine the debt of these underlying government entities, the county, the city, and the state, Chicago's Taxpayer Burden skyrockets to \$122,100. Since New York City's underlying government activities are included in the city's financial report, only the state's Taxpayer Burden needs to be added, resulting in a Taxpayer Burden of \$83,600.

As a result, the per-Taxpayer Burden for the City of Chicago is the highest in the country when the debt of the state and city's

underlying government entities are included.

Collectively, taxpayers in these 10 cities face an average combined per-Taxpayer Burden of more than \$45,000, including county, state, and other "off balance-sheet" government entities. This compares to an average per-Taxpayer Burden of \$17,000 for their city government alone.

Here is a ranking of the combined Taxpayer Burden for each taxpayer living in the 10 largest cities (from best to worst):

1. Phoenix -**\$10,000**
2. San Antonio -**\$17,200**
3. Dallas -**\$23,300**
4. Houston -**\$25,800**
5. San Diego -**\$34,200**
6. San Jose -**\$41,900**
7. Philadelphia -**\$45,800**
8. Los Angeles -**\$49,700**
9. New York City -**\$83,600**
10. Chicago -**\$122,100**

PHOENIX TAXPAYERS ON THE HOOK FOR \$10,000

May 2020 | truthinaaccounting.org

-\$5,500

City of Phoenix

-\$300

Phoenix Union High School District No. 210

-\$200

Paradise Valley Unified School District No. 69

-\$100

Roosevelt Elementary School District No. 66

\$0

Maricopa County Community College District

\$0

Riverside Elementary School District No. 2

-\$800

Maricopa County

-\$300

Washington Elementary School District No. 6

-\$200

Glendale Union High School District No. 205

-\$100

Phoenix Elementary School District No. 1

\$0

Madison Elementary School District No. 38

-\$2,500

Arizona

Needed to pay off state, city,
county, and underlying
governments' unfunded debt.

-\$10,000

per taxpayer

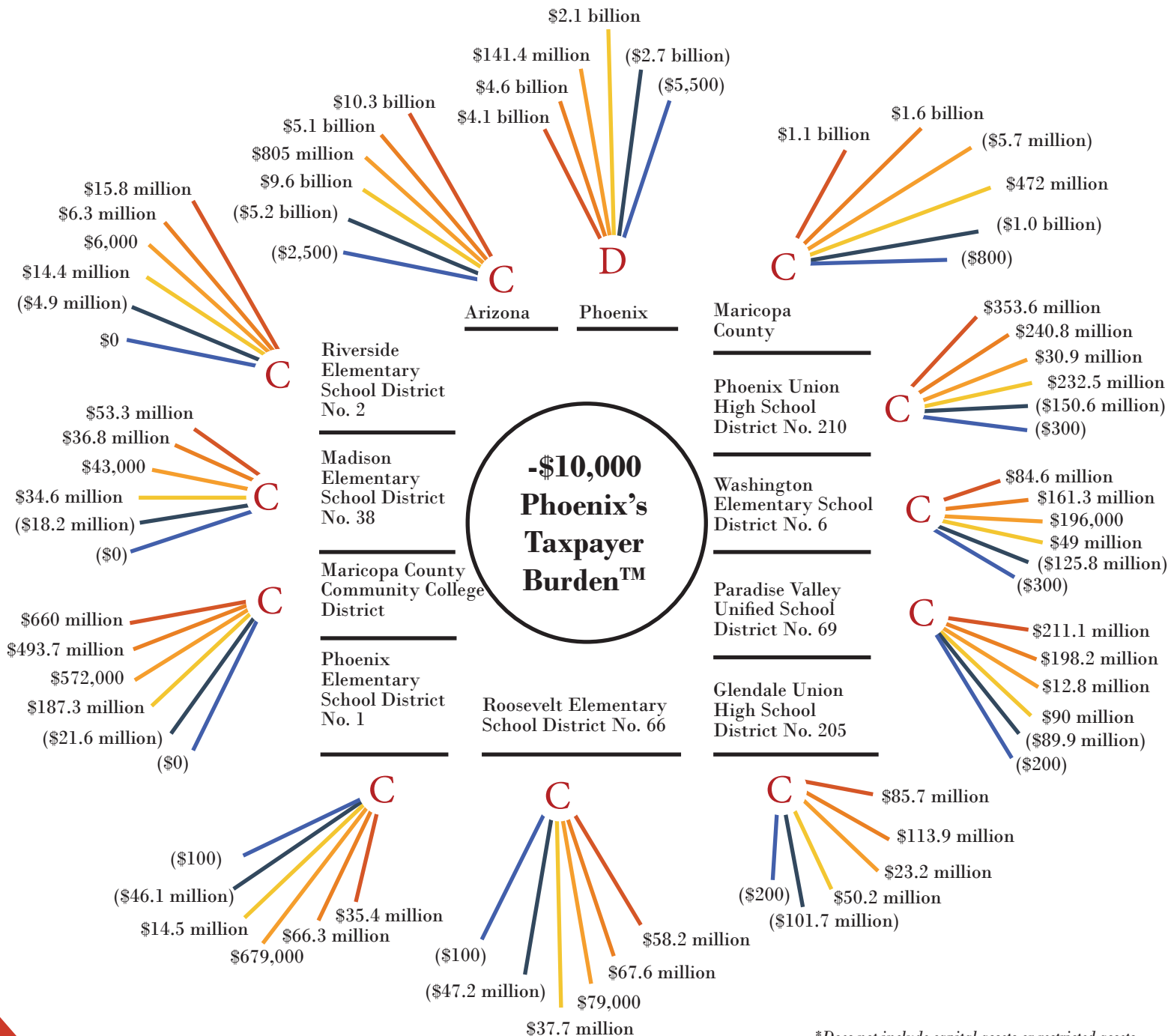
PHOENIX AND ITS UNDERLYING GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

Fast Facts

- The City of Phoenix has a Taxpayer Burden of \$5,500, which is each taxpayer's share of the city's debt.
- Phoenix taxpayers also pay taxes to the county and other underlying government units. If these debts are included, each taxpayer's burden is \$7,500.
- When state debt is added, each taxpayer has a burden of \$10,000.

Legend

- Assets available to pay bills*
- Unfunded pension benefits
- Unfunded other post-employment benefits
- Other bills**
- Money available (needed) to pay bills
- Taxpayer Surplus (Burden)
- Grade



*Does not include capital assets or restricted assets

**Does not include debt related to capital assets

Truth in Accounting is a 501(c)(3) committed to educating and empowering citizens with understandable, reliable, and transparent government financial information. To be knowledgeable participants in their government and its budget process, citizens need truthful and transparent financial information.

SAN ANTONIO TAXPAYERS ON THE HOOK FOR \$17,200

May 2020 | truthinaaccounting.org

-\$1,100

City of San Antonio

+

-\$1,300

Bexar County

+

-\$900

North East Independent School District

+

-\$600

San Antonio Independent School District

+

-\$600

Northside Independent School District

+

-\$300

Alamo Community College District

+

-\$200

Harlandale Independent School District

+

-\$100

VIA Metropolitan Transit

+

-\$100

South San Antonio Independent School District

+

\$0

Edgewood Independent School District

+

\$100

San Antonio River Authority

+

-\$12,100

Texas

=

Needed to pay off state, city,
county, and underlying
governments' unfunded debt.

-\$17,200

per taxpayer

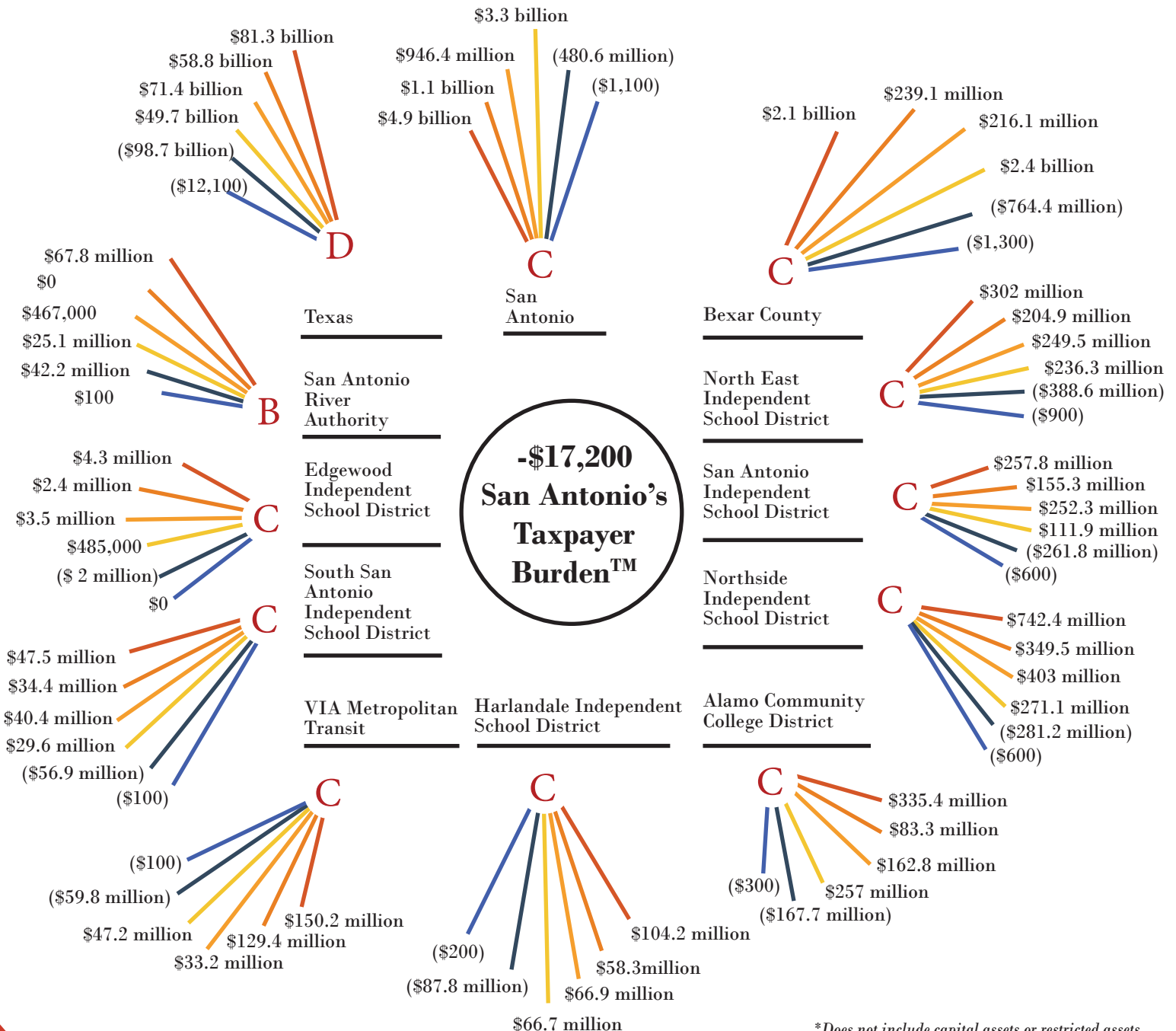
SAN ANTONIO AND ITS UNDERLYING GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

Fast Facts

- The City of San Antonio has a Taxpayer Burden of \$1,100, which is each taxpayer's share of the city's debt.
- San Antonio taxpayers also pay taxes to the county and other underlying government units. If these debts are included, each taxpayer's burden is \$5,100.
- When state debt is added, each taxpayer has a burden of \$17,200.

Legend

- Assets available to pay bills*
- Unfunded pension benefits
- Unfunded other post-employment benefits
- Other bills**
- Money available (needed) to pay bills
- Taxpayer Surplus (Burden)
- Grade



*Does not include capital assets or restricted assets

**Does not include debt related to capital assets

Truth in Accounting is a 501(c)(3) committed to educating and empowering citizens with understandable, reliable, and transparent government financial information. To be knowledgeable participants in their government and its budget process, citizens need truthful and transparent financial information.



DALLAS TAXPAYERS ON THE HOOK FOR \$23,300

May 2020 | truthinaaccounting.org

-\$9,400

City of Dallas

+

-\$2,100

Dallas Independent School District

+

\$0

Dallas County

+

\$0

Dallas County Community College District

+

\$300

Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport

+

-\$12,100

Texas

=

Needed to pay off state, city,
county, and underlying
governments' unfunded debt.

-\$23,300

per taxpayer

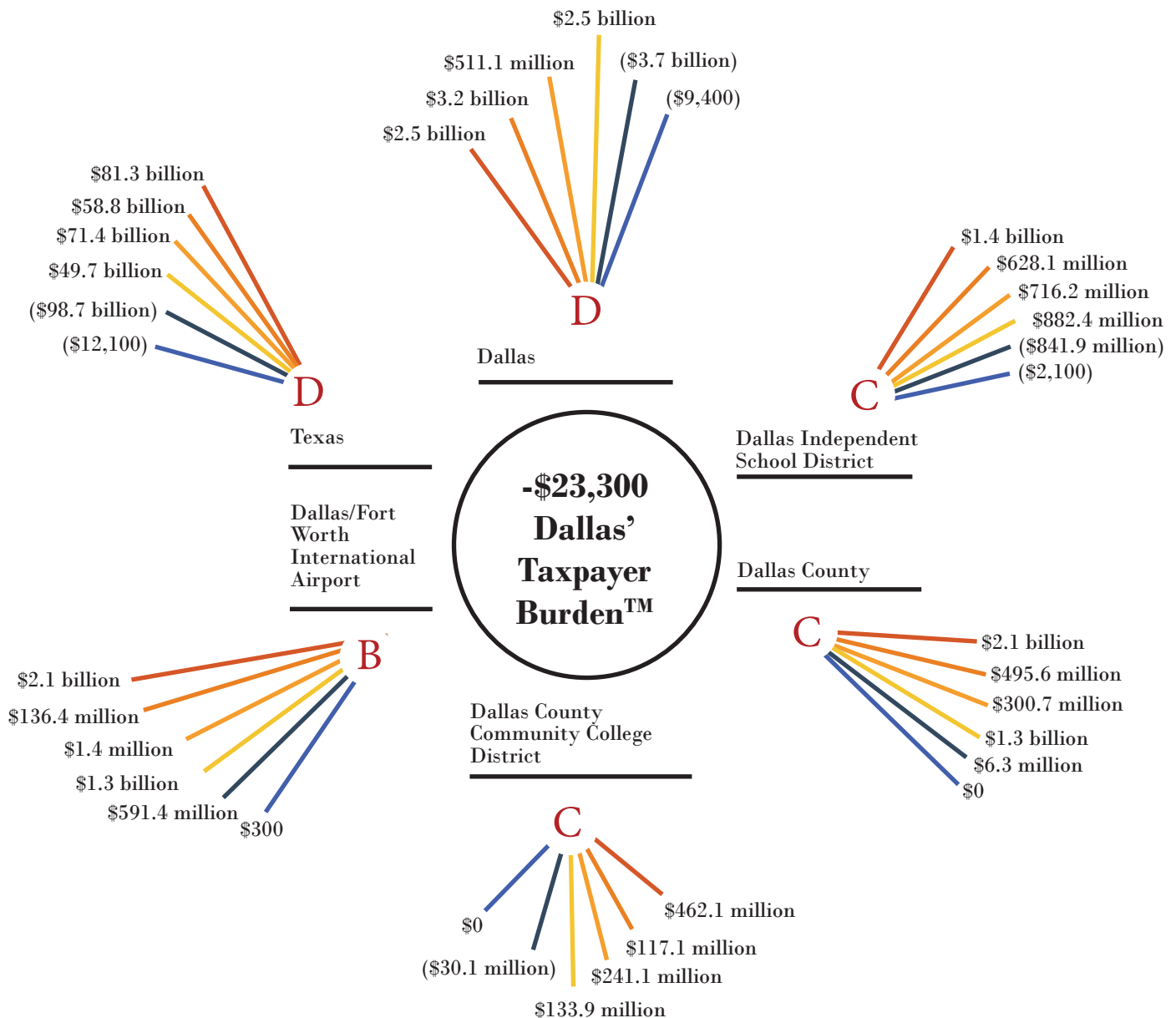
DALLAS AND ITS UNDERLYING GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

Fast Facts

- The City of Dallas has a Taxpayer Burden of \$9,400, which is each taxpayer's share of the city's debt.
- Dallas taxpayers also pay taxes to the county and other underlying government units. If these debts are included, each taxpayer's burden is \$11,200.
- When state debt is added, each taxpayer has a burden of \$23,300.

Legend

- Assets available to pay bills*
- Unfunded pension benefits
- Unfunded other post-employment benefits
- Other bills**
- Money available (needed) to pay bills
- Taxpayer Surplus (Burden)
- Grade



*Does not include capital assets or restricted assets

**Does not include debt related to capital assets

Truth in Accounting is a 501(c)(3) committed to educating and empowering citizens with understandable, reliable, and transparent government financial information. To be knowledgeable participants in their government and its budget process, citizens need truthful and transparent financial information.



HOUSTON TAXPAYERS ON THE HOOK FOR \$25,800

May 2020 | truthinaaccounting.org

-\$11,600

City of Houston

+

-\$900

Houston Independent School District

+

-\$600

Harris County

+

-\$300

Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County

+

-\$300

Spring Branch Independent School District

+

-\$200

Alief Independent School District

+

-\$100

Houston Community College

+

\$300

Port of Houston Authority of Harris County

+

-\$12,100

Texas

=

Needed to pay off state, city,
county, and underlying
governments' unfunded debt.

-\$25,800
per taxpayer

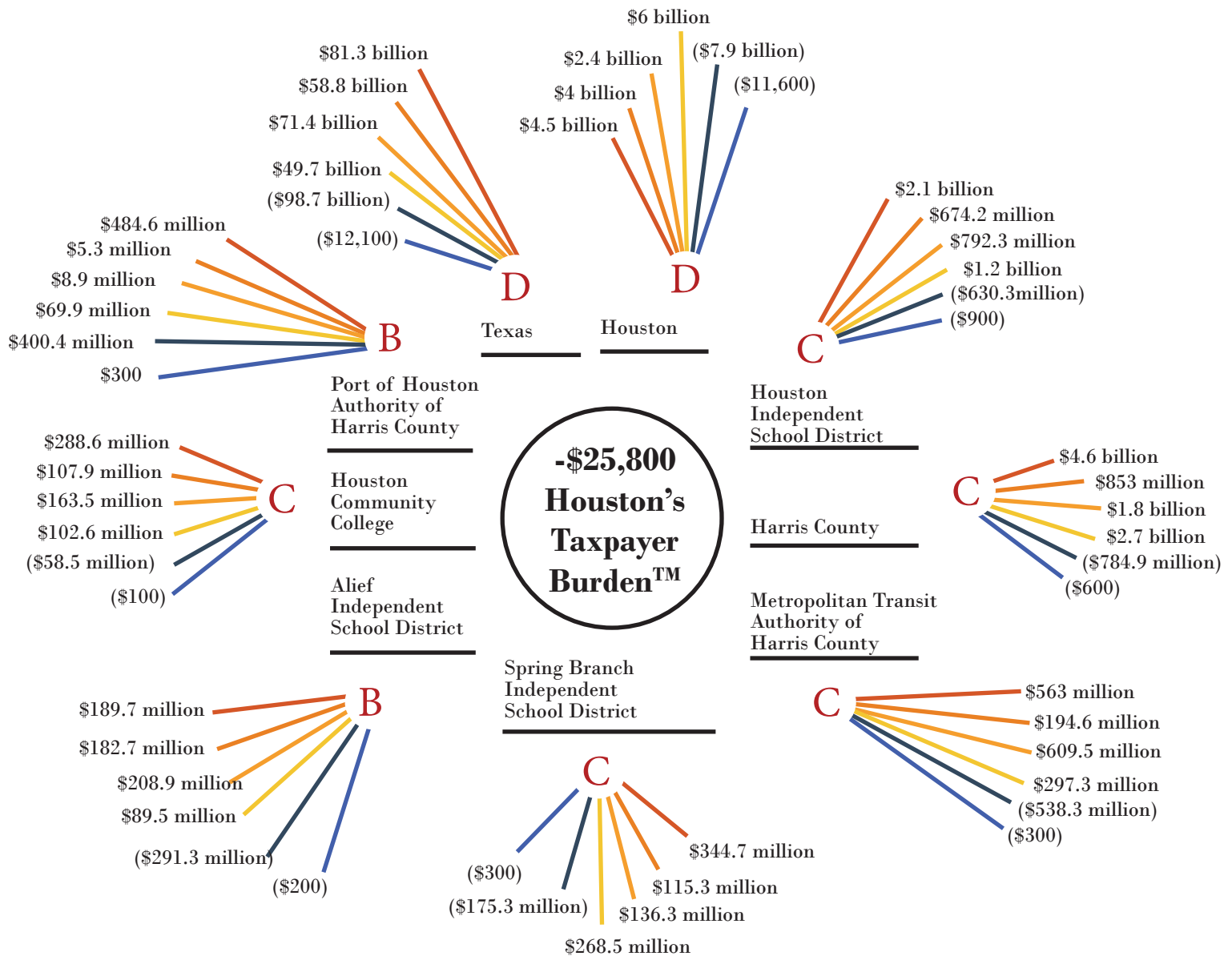
HOUSTON AND ITS UNDERLYING GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

Fast Facts

- The City of Houston has a Taxpayer Burden of \$11,600, which is each taxpayer's share of the city's debt.
- Houston taxpayers also pay taxes to the county and other underlying government units. If these debts are included, each taxpayer's burden is \$13,700.
- When state debt is added, each taxpayer has a burden of \$25,800.

Legend

- Assets available to pay bills*
- Unfunded pension benefits
- Unfunded other post-employment benefits
- Other bills**
- Money available (needed) to pay bills
- Taxpayer Surplus (Burden)
- Grade



*Does not include capital assets or restricted assets

**Does not include debt related to capital assets

Truth in Accounting is a 501(c)(3) committed to educating and empowering citizens with understandable, reliable, and transparent government financial information. To be knowledgeable participants in their government and its budget process, citizens need truthful and transparent financial information.



SAN DIEGO TAXPAYERS ON THE HOOK FOR \$34,200

May 2020 | truthinaaccounting.org

-\$4,500

City of San Diego

+

-\$4,300

San Diego Unified School District

+

-\$1,700

San Diego County

+

-\$900

San Diego Community College District

+

-\$900

Poway Unified School District

+

-\$200

San Ysidro School District

+

-\$100

San Diego Metropolitan Transit District

+

\$200

San Diego County Water Authority

+

-\$21,800

California

=

Needed to pay off state, city,
county, and underlying
governments' unfunded debt.

-\$34,200

per taxpayer

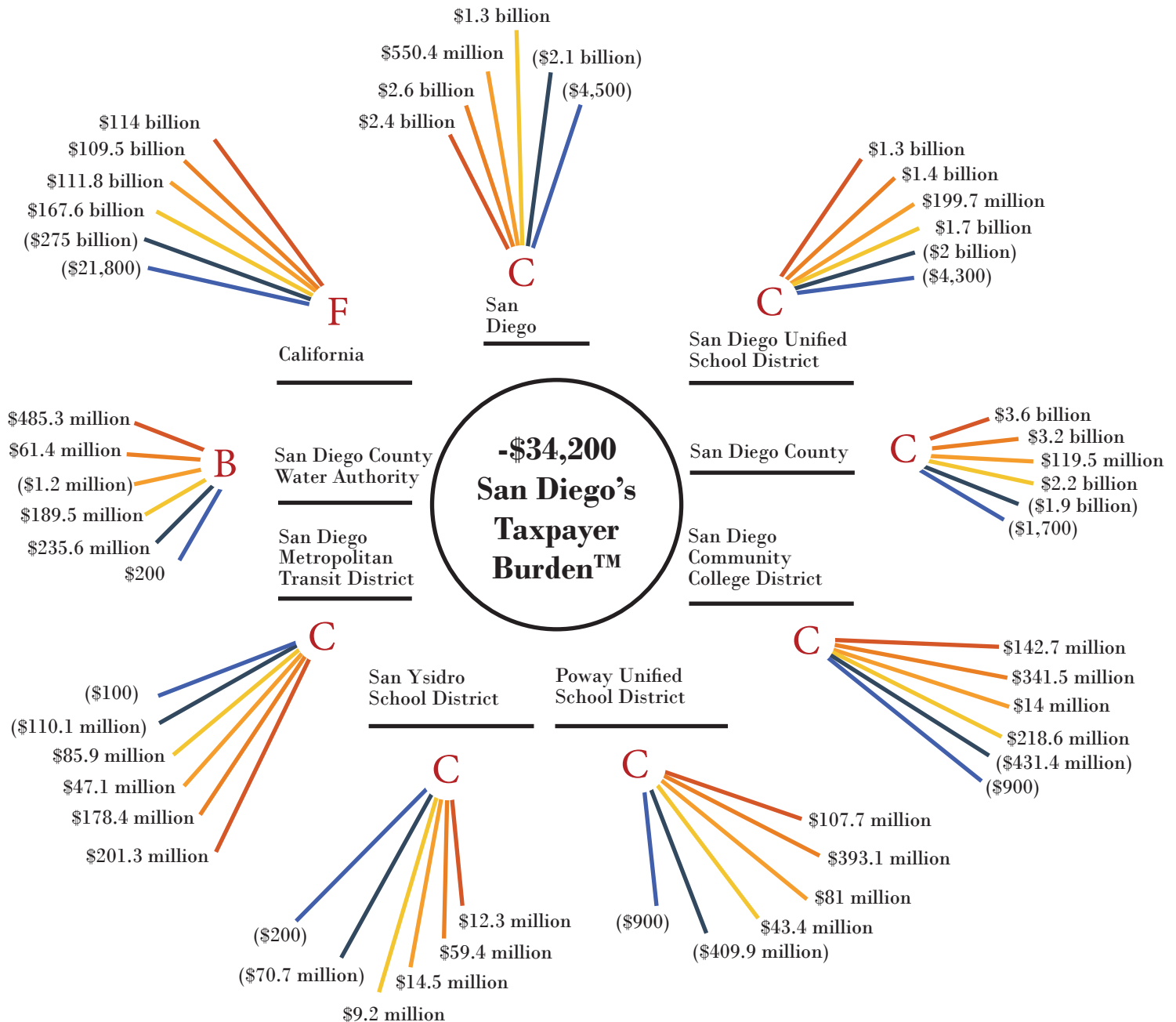
SAN DIEGO AND ITS UNDERLYING GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

Fast Facts

- The City of San Diego has a Taxpayer Burden of \$4,500, which is each taxpayer's share of the city's debt.
- San Diego taxpayers also pay taxes to the county and other underlying government units. If these debts are included, each taxpayer's burden is \$12,400.
- When state debt is added, each taxpayer has a burden of \$34,200.

Legend

- Assets available to pay bills*
- Unfunded pension benefits
- Unfunded other post-employment benefits
- Other bills**
- Money available (needed) to pay bills
- Taxpayer Surplus (Burden)
- Grade



*Does not include capital assets or restricted assets

**Does not include debt related to capital assets

Truth in Accounting is a 501(c)(3) committed to educating and empowering citizens with understandable, reliable, and transparent government financial information. To be knowledgeable participants in their government and its budget process, citizens need truthful and transparent financial information.

SAN JOSE TAXPAYERS ON THE HOOK FOR \$41,900

May 2020 | truthinaaccounting.org

-\$9,400

City of San Jose

-\$900

East Side Union High School District

-\$500

San Jose-Evergreen Community College District

-\$400

Alum Rock Union School District

-\$300

Franklin-McKinley School District

-\$300

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

-\$6,400

Santa Clara County

-\$800

San Jose Unified School District

-\$400

Evergreen School District

-\$400

Oak Grove School District

-\$300

Berryessa Union School District

-\$21,800

California

Needed to pay off state, city,
county, and underlying
governments' unfunded debt.

-\$41,900

per taxpayer

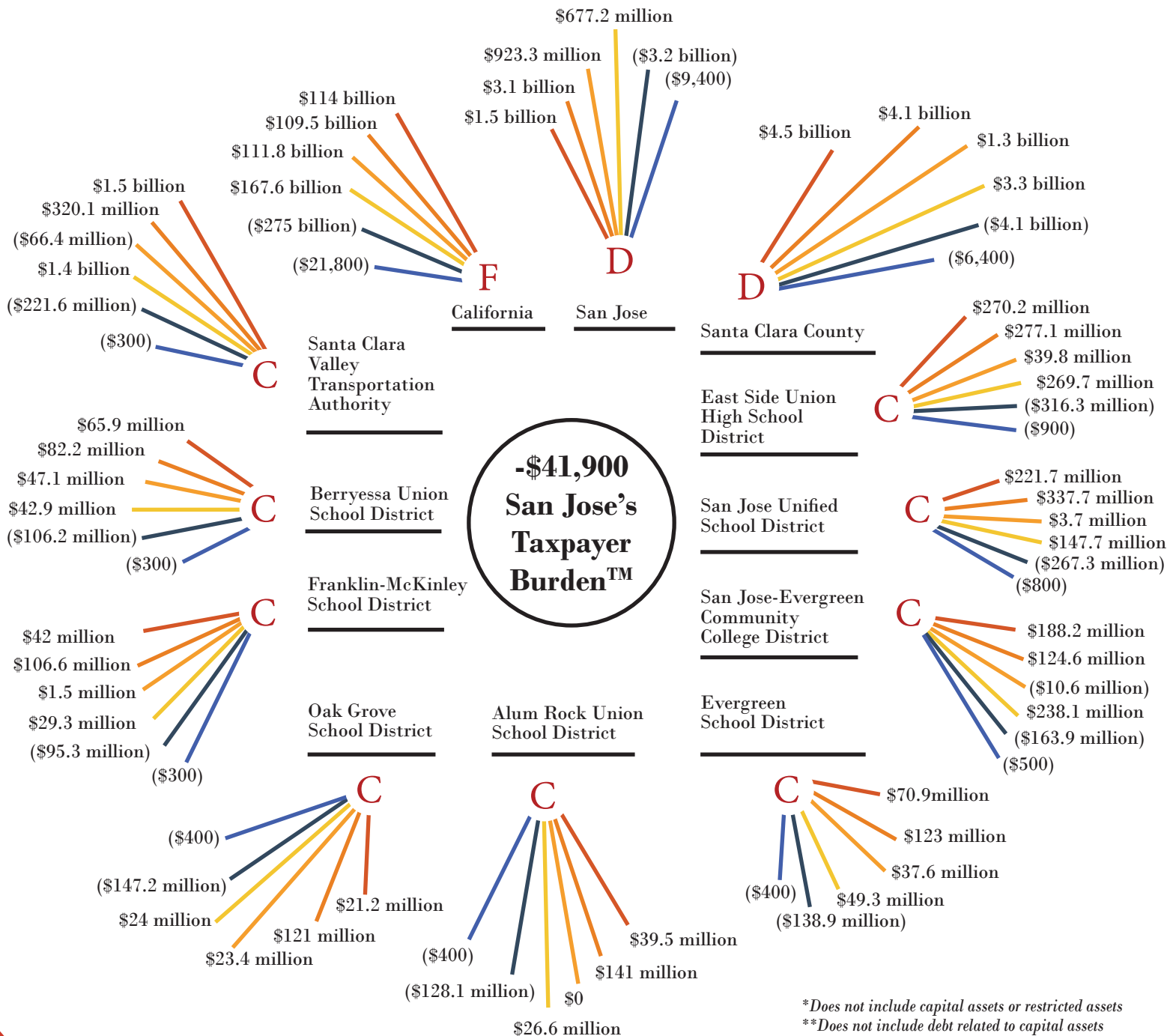
SAN JOSE AND ITS UNDERLYING GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

Fast Facts

- The City of San Jose has a Taxpayer Burden of \$9,400, which is each taxpayer's share of the city's debt.
- San Jose taxpayers also pay taxes to the county and other underlying government units. If these debts are included, each taxpayer's burden is \$20,100.
- When state debt is added, each taxpayer has a burden of \$41,900.

Legend

- Assets available to pay bills*
- Unfunded pension benefits
- Unfunded other post-employment benefits
- Other bills**
- Money available (needed) to pay bills
- Taxpayer Surplus (Burden)
- Grade



*Does not include capital assets or restricted assets

**Does not include debt related to capital assets

Truth in Accounting is a 501(c)(3) committed to educating and empowering citizens with understandable, reliable, and transparent government financial information. To be knowledgeable participants in their government and its budget process, citizens need truthful and transparent financial information.

PHILADELPHIA TAXPAYERS ON THE HOOK FOR \$45,800

May 2020 | truthinaaccounting.org

-\$25,500

City of Philadelphia

+

-\$4,000

Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority

+

\$800

Philadelphia Housing Authority

+

-\$17,100

Pennsylvania

=

Needed to pay off state, city,
county, and underlying
governments' unfunded debt.

-\$45,800

per taxpayer

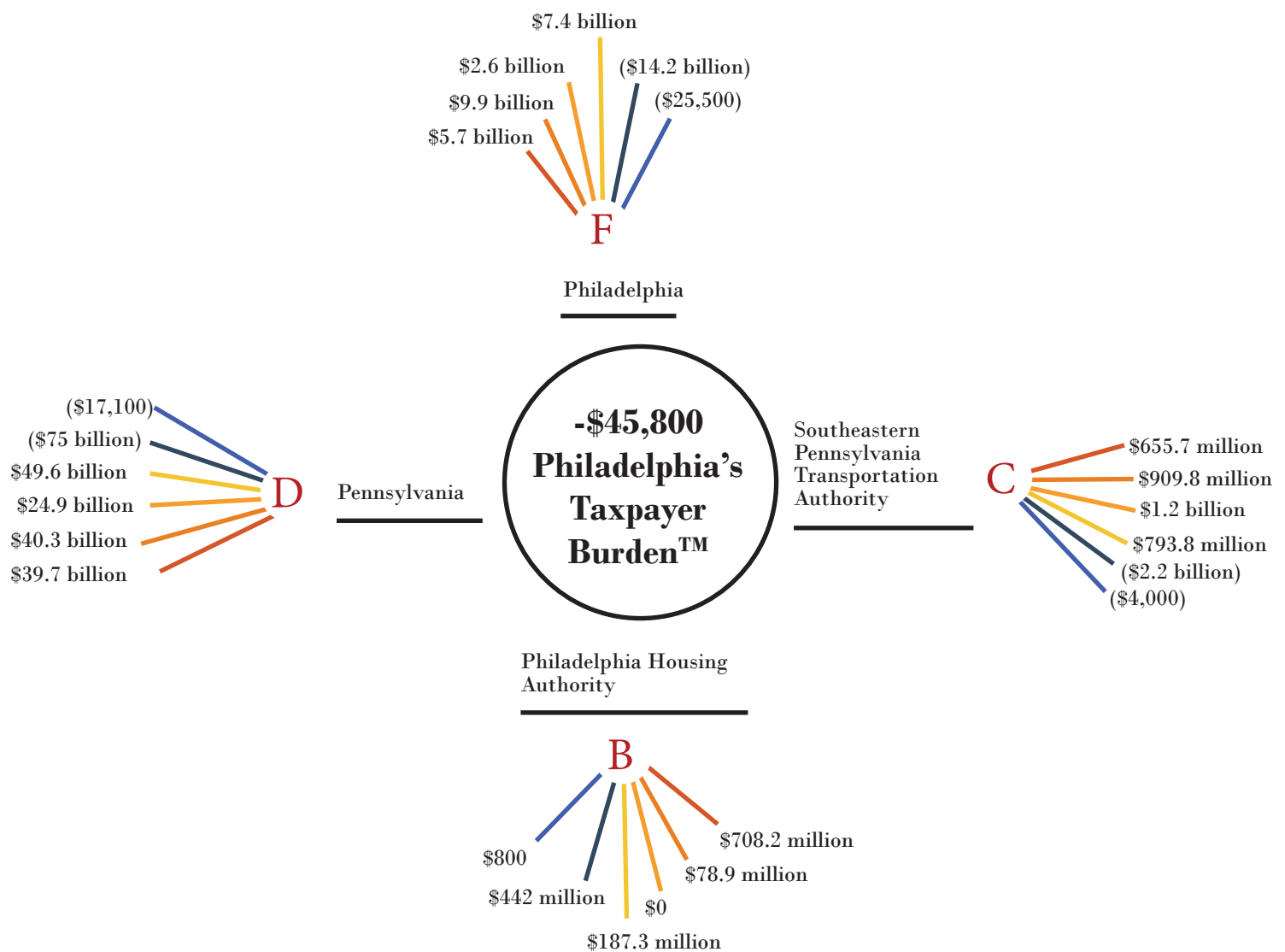
PHILADELPHIA AND ITS UNDERLYING GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

Fast Facts

- The City of Philadelphia has a Taxpayer Burden of \$25,500, which is each taxpayer's share of the city's debt.
- Philadelphia taxpayers also pay taxes to other underlying government units. If these debts are included, each taxpayer's burden is \$28,700.
- When state debt is added, each taxpayer has a burden of \$45,800.

Legend

- Assets available to pay bills*
- Unfunded pension benefits
- Unfunded other post-employment benefits
- Other bills**
- Money available (needed) to pay bills
- Taxpayer Surplus (Burden)
- Grade



*Does not include capital assets or restricted assets

**Does not include debt related to capital assets

Truth in Accounting is a 501(c)(3) committed to educating and empowering citizens with understandable, reliable, and transparent government financial information. To be knowledgeable participants in their government and its budget process, citizens need truthful and transparent financial information.

LOS ANGELES TAXPAYERS ON THE HOOK FOR \$49,700

May 2020 | truthinaaccounting.org

-\$4,000

City of Los Angeles

+

-\$12,100

Los Angeles Unified School District

+

-\$10,400

Los Angeles County

+

-\$1,000

Los Angeles Community College District

+

-\$400

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

+

\$0

Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

+

-\$21,800

California

=

-\$49,700

per taxpayer

Needed to pay off state, city,
county, and underlying
governments' unfunded debt.

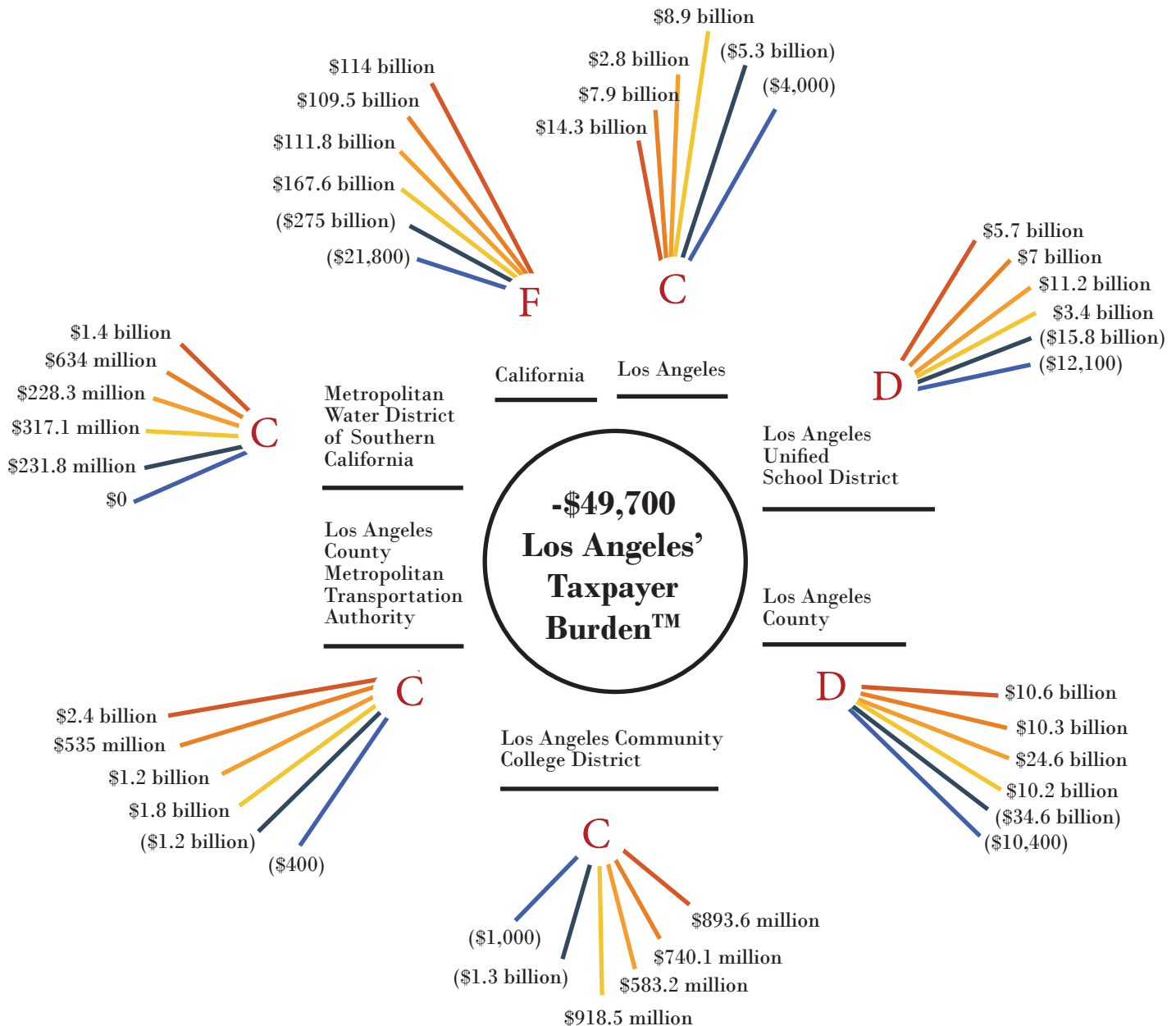
LOS ANGELES AND ITS UNDERLYING GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

Fast Facts

- The City of Los Angeles has a Taxpayer Burden of \$4,000, which is each taxpayer's share of the city's debt.
- Los Angeles taxpayers also pay taxes to the county and other underlying government units. If these debts are included, each taxpayer's burden is \$27,900.
- When state debt is added, each taxpayer has a burden of \$49,700.

Legend

- Assets available to pay bills*
- Unfunded pension benefits
- Unfunded other post-employment benefits
- Other bills**
- Money available (needed) to pay bills
- Taxpayer Surplus (Burden)
- Grade



*Does not include capital assets or restricted assets

**Does not include debt related to capital assets

Truth in Accounting is a 501(c)(3) committed to educating and empowering citizens with understandable, reliable, and transparent government financial information. To be knowledgeable participants in their government and its budget process, citizens need truthful and transparent financial information.



NEW YORK CITY TAXPAYERS ON THE HOOK FOR \$83,600

May 2020 | truthinaaccounting.org

-\$63,100

New York City

+

-\$20,500

New York State

=

Needed to pay off state, city,
county, and underlying
governments' unfunded debt.

-\$83,600

per taxpayer

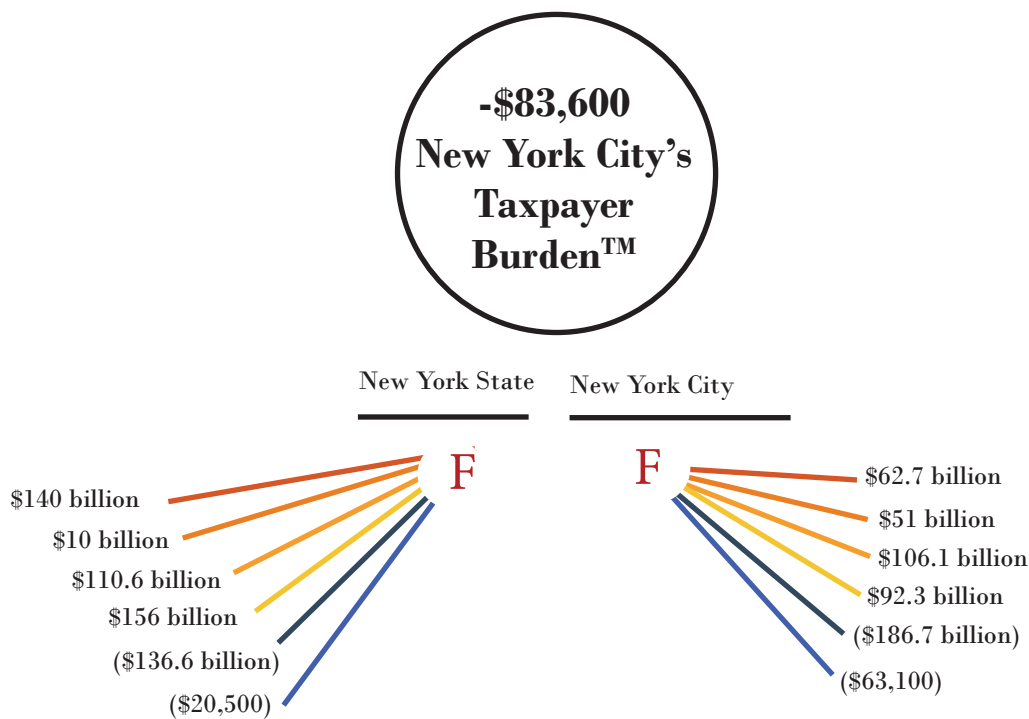
NEW YORK CITY AND ITS UNDERLYING GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

Fast Facts

- New York City has a Taxpayer Burden of \$63,100, which is each taxpayer's share of the city's debt.
- Unlike other cities, New York City's underlying government units are already included in the city's annual financial report.
- When state debt is added to city debt, each taxpayer has a burden of \$83,600.

Legend

- Assets available to pay bills*
- Unfunded pension benefits
- Unfunded other post-employment benefits
- Other bills**
- Money available (needed) to pay bills
- Taxpayer Surplus (Burden)
- Grade



*Does not include capital assets or restricted assets
**Does not include debt related to capital assets

CHICAGO TAXPAYERS ON THE HOOK FOR \$122,100

May 2020 | truthinaaccounting.org

-\$37,100

City of Chicago

+

-\$18,400

Chicago Public Schools

+

-\$8,800

Cook County

+

-\$4,000

Chicago Transit Authority

+

-\$1,200

Chicago Park District

+

-\$700

Metro Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

+

-\$100

Chicago Community College District

+

\$800

Chicago Housing Authority

+

-\$52,600

Illinois

=

-\$122,100

per taxpayer

Needed to pay off state, city,
county, and underlying
governments' unfunded debt.

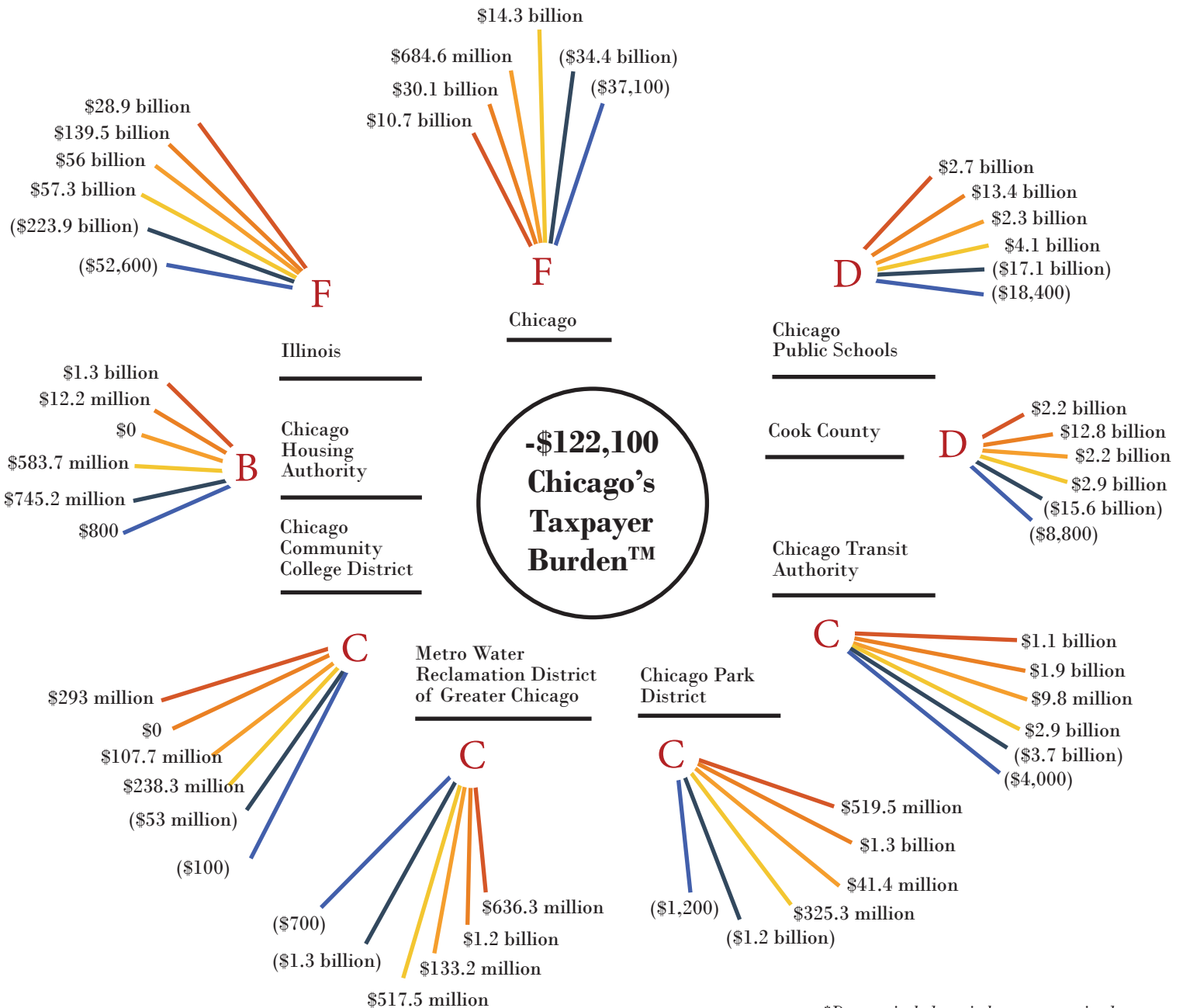
CHICAGO AND ITS UNDERLYING GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

Fast Facts

- The City of Chicago has a Taxpayer Burden of \$37,100, which is each taxpayer's share of the city's debt.
- Chicago taxpayers also pay taxes to the county and other underlying government units. If these debts are included, each taxpayer's burden is \$69,500.
- When state debt is added, each taxpayer has a burden of \$122,100.

Legend

- Assets available to pay bills*
- Unfunded pension benefits
- Unfunded other post-employment benefits
- Other bills**
- Money available (needed) to pay bills
- Taxpayer Surplus (Burden)
- Grade



*Does not include capital assets or restricted assets

**Does not include debt related to capital assets

Truth in Accounting is a 501(c)(3) committed to educating and empowering citizens with understandable, reliable, and transparent government financial information. To be knowledgeable participants in their government and its budget process, citizens need truthful and transparent financial information.