

# MONTANA FINANCES CONTINUE TO CRUMBLE

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## THE FINANCIAL STATE OF MONTANA

Repeated decisions by state officials have left the state with a staggering debt burden of \$942.6 million, according to Truth in Accounting's (TIA) analysis of the most recent financial filings. That burden equates to \$2,700 for every Montana taxpayer.

These statistics are troubling, but what's more troubling is that state government officials continue to obscure large amounts of retirement debt on their balance sheets, despite new rules to increase financial transparency. This skewed financial data gives state residents a false impression of their state's overall financial health.

### Here's the truth:

**\$942.6  
million**

money needed  
to pay bills

**-\$2,700**

taxpayer  
burden™

**C**

Montana's  
financial grade

Data included in this report is derived from the state of Montana's 2016 audited Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and retirement plans' actuarial reports.

# MONTANA FINANCIAL BREAKDOWN

## FAST FACTS

- + Montana has \$5 billion available in assets to pay \$6 billion worth of bills.
- + The outcome: A \$942.6 million shortfall and a \$2,700 taxpayer burden™.
- + Despite reporting most of its pension debt, a significant amount of retirement liabilities are still obscured from the financial statements. The state's total hidden debt amounts to \$570.2 million.

### THE STATE'S BILLS EXCEED ITS ASSETS

Assets	\$15,592,697,000
<i>Minus:</i> Capital assets	-\$6,617,284,000
Restricted assets	-\$3,956,350,000
Assets available to pay bills	\$5,019,063,000
<i>Minus:</i> Bills	-\$5,961,660,000
Money needed to pay bills	-\$942,597,000
<b>Each taxpayer's share of this debt</b>	<b>-\$2,700</b>

### BILLS THE STATE HAS ACCUMULATED

Bonds	\$960,313,000
Other liabilities	\$2,749,904,000
<i>Minus:</i> Debt related to capital assets	-\$414,997,000
Unfunded pension benefits	\$2,208,005,000
Unfunded retiree health care	\$458,435,000
<b>Bills</b>	<b>\$5,961,660,000</b>

## GRADE: C

Bottom line: Montana's taxpayer burden™ is less than \$5,000, so it has received a "C" for its finances from Truth in Accounting. While better off than many other states, Montana still owes more than it owns.

Truth in Accounting is 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.