



NAVJEET K. BAL
COMMISSIONER

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Revenue
Office of the Commissioner
P.O. Box 9550
Boston, MA 02114-9550

March 17, 2011

The Honorable Brian S. Dempsey, Chair
House Committee on Ways and Means
State House
Room 243
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Viriato Manuel deMacedo, Representative
House Committee on Ways and Means
State House
Room 124
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Stephen M. Brewer, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
State House
Room 212
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Michael R. Knapik, Senator
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
State House
Room 419
Boston, MA 02133

Honorable Chairmen and Ranking Minority Members of the Ways and Means Committees:

Pursuant to chapter 196 of the Acts of 2008, the Department of Revenue hereby submits its mid-month revenue tax collection report for the month of March 2011. The attached table shows March 2011 month-to-date and FY2011 year-to-date tax revenue collections through March 15, 2011, along with the dollar and percentage changes from the same collection period in March 2010. Also shown are the percentage growth amounts for the full month of March 2011 and for FY2011 year-to-date through the end of March 2011 that were assumed in the benchmarks corresponding to the January 18, 2011 FY2011 tax revenue estimate of \$19.784 billion, which was an upward revision from the GAA (adjusted for the impacts of the economic development bill and the sales tax holidays in August 2010) FY2011 tax revenue estimate of \$19.078 billion. Please note that the \$19.784 billion estimate and the March 2011 month-to-date and year-to-date budgetary fund collection totals do not include increased cigarette tax collections resulting from the July 2008 increase in the cigarette tax rate, which are dedicated to the Commonwealth Care Trust

Fund, a non-budgetary fund. However, the increase in cigarette tax collections resulting from the higher cigarette tax rate is shown in a separate line at the bottom of the table.

The monthly benchmark corresponding to the January 18, 2011 revised FY11 tax revenue estimate of \$19.784 billion projects March tax revenues of \$1.610 billion, a decrease of \$15 million from March 2010 tax collections. The March benchmark assumes that withholding revenues will increase by \$42 million, income tax cash refunds will decline by \$2 million, and sales tax receipts will grow by \$6 million (the elimination of the sales tax on alcoholic beverages is projected to reduce sales tax collections by \$7 to \$9 million). Corporate/business collections are projected to decline by \$66 million this month, as tax law changes (i.e., the further reduction in the corporate and financial institutions tax rates), the incremental use of refundable credits, and one time events (i.e., one-time settlement payment of \$40 million received in March 2010 but not repeated this year) are assumed to affect revenue collections this month.

Through March 15, 2011, March 2011 month-to-date tax collections totaled \$842 million, up \$87 million from the same period in March 2010, with most of the increase resulting from withholding and corporate and business (particularly the corporate and insurance) excise taxes. Month-to-date income tax withholding totaled \$456 million, up \$35 million from the same period last year, with the full month benchmark projecting an increase of \$42 million. March 2011 month-to-date income tax cash refunds totaled \$173 million, down \$7 million from the same period in March 2010, and sales and use tax totaled \$60 million, up \$8 million from the same period last year. Month-to-date corporate & business taxes, which include corporate, financial institutions, insurance, and public utility excise taxes, totaled \$428 million, up \$31 million from the same period last year, with a \$58 million combined increase in corporate, insurance and public utility excise tax payments, offset by a \$27 million decline in financial institutions excise tax payments.

Several caveats are in order when considering the attached report:

- In March, the Commonwealth usually receives and deposits a significant proportion of the month's tax revenues during the second half of the month, primarily because non-motor vehicle sales, meals, motor fuels, and rooms tax payments are due on the 20th of each month (and on the 21st of this month, as the 20th falls on a Sunday), and final payments with corporate and business tax returns and extensions are received through the end of the month. Therefore, month-to-date growth comparisons with last March for sales tax, meals tax, and corporate and business tax are not meaningful at this point, and month-to-date growth for these tax types is not necessarily indicative of what final growth will be for the full month;
- There may be other differences in the due dates for certain tax payments from one fiscal year to the next which complicate month-to-date comparisons to the prior year.

As a result of these considerations, revenues received through the 15th day of March as reported in the attached table are not necessarily indicative of what the final results for the full month will be. Specifically, they do not represent one-half of the revenues to be received in the full month and are at best a mere snap-shot picture of the revenues received through the reported date. Any variances from the monthly benchmark at this point should not be relied on as an indicator of what the total final revenues for the month will be, compared to the monthly benchmarks.

If you have any questions concerning this report, please contact me (at 626-2201) or Kazim P. Ozyurt, Acting Director of the Office of Tax Policy Analysis (at 626-2100).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Navjeet K. Bal". The signature is written in a cursive style with a loop at the end of the last name.

Navjeet K. Bal
Commissioner

Attachment

Cc: Jay Gonzalez, Secretary of Administration and Finance
Representative Robert A. DeLeo, House Speaker
Senator Therese Murray, Senate President
Representative Jay R. Kaufman, House Chair, Joint Committee on Revenue
Senator Gale D. Candaras, Senate Chair, Joint Committee on Revenue
Representative Bradley H. Jones, Jr., House Minority Leader
Senator Bruce Tarr, Senate Minority Leader

Mid-Month Tax Collection Report for March 2011 (in \$ Millions)

Tax Collections as of March 15, 2011, Compared to Same Collection Period in FY2010 and to the FY2011 Tax Revenue Estimate of \$19.784 Billion

| | ----- Month of March ----- | | | | | | ----- FY11 Year-to-Date ----- | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|--|
| | 03/11 MTD Collections | 03/11 MTD v. 03/10 MTD \$ Change | 03/11 MTD v. 03/10 MTD % Change | 03/11 Full Month Benchmark (*) | % Growth from 03/10 Assumed in Monthly Benchmark | \$ Needed to Reach 03/11 Full Month Benchmark (*) | 03/11 FY11 YTD Collections | 03/11 FY11 YTD \$ Change | 03/11 FY11 YTD % Change | FY11 YTD Benchmark (**) | % Growth from 03/10 Assumed in FY11 YTD Benchmark | \$ Needed to Reach FY11 YTD Benchmark (**) |
| Income - Total | 315 | 44 | 16.0% | 601 | 8.2% | 286 | 7,409 | 720 | 10.8% | 7,669 | 10.0% | 260 |
| Income Withholding | 456 | 35 | 8.2% | 845 | 5.2% | 389 | 6,733 | 411 | 6.5% | 7,103 | 5.9% | 370 |
| Income Est. Payments (Cash) | 5 | 0 | 2.7% | 11 | (2.9%) | 6 | 1,213 | 240 | 24.7% | 1,201 | 22.6% | (12) |
| Income Returns/Bills | 28 | 2 | 6.9% | 67 | 3.2% | 39 | 290 | 5 | 1.6% | 317 | (2.4%) | 26 |
| Income Refunds (Cash) | 173 | (7) | (3.9%) | 321 | (0.6%) | 148 | 823 | (78) | (8.6%) | 955 | (8.5%) | 132 |
| Sales & Use - Total | 60 | 8 | 14.9% | 360 | 1.8% | 300 | 3,372 | 296 | 9.6% | 3,672 | 8.7% | 300 |
| Sales - Regular | 25 | 5 | 23.5% | 244 | 0.2% | 219 | 2,400 | 213 | 9.7% | 2,618 | 8.6% | 217 |
| Sales - Meals | 7 | 0 | 0.1% | 58 | 3.5% | 50 | 555 | 48 | 9.4% | 609 | 9.6% | 54 |
| Sales - Motor Vehicles | 27 | 3 | 12.1% | 58 | 7.0% | 31 | 417 | 36 | 9.3% | 445 | 8.3% | 28 |
| Corporate & Business - Total | 428 | 31 | 7.8% | 532 | (11.1%) | 104 | 1,437 | 52 | 3.8% | 1,584 | (0.1%) | 147 |
| Corporate Excise | 335 | 46 | 15.7% | 392 | (9.1%) | 57 | 1,277 | 240 | 23.2% | 1,343 | 13.9% | 65 |
| Insurance Excise | 95 | 11 | 12.8% | 112 | 12.1% | 17 | 196 | 4 | 1.9% | 216 | 3.8% | 20 |
| Financial Institutions Excise | (3) | (27) | N/A | 27 | (59.0%) | 31 | (24) | (182) | N/A | 38 | (81.2%) | 62 |
| Public Utilities Excise | 2 | 1 | 349.4% | 1 | 0.0% | (1) | (12) | (10) | N/A | (13) | 412.9% | (0) |
| All Other | 39 | 5 | 14.4% | 117 | (0.6%) | 79 | 1,204 | 39 | 3.4% | 1,285 | 2.9% | 81 |
| Total Tax Collections | 842 | 87 | 11.6% | 1,610 | (0.9%) | 768 | 13,422 | 1,107 | 9.0% | 14,209 | 7.8% | 787 |

Memo: Cigarette Tax Increase for Commonwealth Care Trust Fund (Not in Estimate or Benchmarks)

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|-----|--------|----|---|---------|---|----|----|-------|----|---|------|---|
| | 6 | (0) | (2.4%) | 10 | / | (17.4%) | 5 | 88 | 10 | 12.8% | 92 | / | 8.9% | 4 |
|--|---|-----|--------|----|---|---------|---|----|----|-------|----|---|------|---|

(*) Benchmarks are based on the FY11 tax revenue estimate of \$19.784 billion

(**) Year-to-date benchmarks are year-to-date full month benchmark totals (i.e., July through March full month totals)

Note: Detail may not add to total due to rounding and other technical factors.