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First-Ever Unclaimed Property E-Claim System

Washington Department of Revenue Wins National Management Award

OLYMPIA, Wash., April 3, 2007 — The Washington State Department of Revenue has won a national management award for developing a comprehensive system that allows people to file Unclaimed Property claims online.

The Federation of Tax Administrator's today named Washington winner of its 2007 Award for Outstanding Management and Organizational Initiative.

The judges commended the E-claim system for being the first in the country to fundamentally streamline the claiming of unclaimed property, not only making the process more efficient but making it considerably more citizen-friendly. They called it "a huge leap forward -- something that might have been obvious that other states should have done, but nobody has. As a customer service idea, it's just great."

Governor Chris Gregoire lauded the agency for taking the initiative to improve upon old-fashioned paper claims that were both time-consuming and slow to process.

"This is the type of customer service improvement I have asked all agencies to pursue," Gregoire said. "Allowing people to search for and claim unclaimed property online is much quicker and efficient than processing stacks of paperwork."

This is the second straight win for Washington in this category. The agency also won in 2004, the last time the management award was given, for its Organization Development Initiative, an overall umbrella that coordinated the agency's quality improvement and strategy planning efforts.

The Department of Revenue is the central repository for lost property, holding more than \$500 million for some 1.5 million owners. During Fiscal Year 2006, the Department returned a record \$34.6 million to more than 90,000 claimants.

The Department's Unclaimed Property web site is at www.ClaimYourCash.org and <http://ucp.dor.wa.gov/>.

The Federation of Tax Administrators is a nonprofit organization comprised of the tax and revenue departments of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, New York City and Puerto Rico. Its mission is to improve the standards and methods of tax administration.

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