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Tremaine Smith receives national medal for leadership in interstate tax cooperation

Washington, D.C., May 15, 2009 — The Department of Revenue's Tremaine Smith has earned a national medal recognizing his leadership in improving tax administration through interstate cooperation.

The Federation of Tax Administrators and Multistate Tax Commission named Smith, senior assistant director of operations for Revenue, as winner of the Wade Anderson Memorial Medal for Leadership in Interstate Tax Cooperation. The medal is one of the highest honors in tax administration, and recognizes his 31 years of leadership in addressing tax issues of crucial importance to states.

The tax organizations cited Smith's work to improve communications in the Border States Caucus, comprising states bordering Canada and Mexico. Smith encouraged cooperation and information sharing among these states to improve data analysis, auditing, tax discovery and electronic filing.

Smith also served as Washington's point person for the Northwest Regional Sales Tax Pilot Project, a government-business effort to simplify collection and reporting requirements in Utah, Idaho and Washington. This project gained national attention and helped inspire the creation of the Streamlined Sales Tax project (SST), a multi-state effort to encourage online retailers to collect sales tax. Smith played a key role in that effort, which led to the passage of tax simplification legislation in Washington.

“Trim has shown us what skillful communications, diplomacy, persistence and persuasion can achieve,” Department Director Cindi Holmstrom said. “Throughout all these regional and national efforts, he has maintained a ‘big picture’ perspective while being mindful of Washington State’s interests.”

Smith earlier participated as Washington’s representative on the Advisory Commission on Electronic Commerce (ACEC), created by Congress through the Internet Tax Freedom Act. The Commission’s findings also helped stimulate creation of the SST project.

In 2005, Governor Chris Gregoire named Smith winner of her Distinguished Manager Award for his leadership in using data analysis to increase department efficiency.

This isn’t the first time Smith has received national recognition. In 2003, the FTA named Smith winner of its Award for Leadership and Service for “the magnitude of his interstate and organizational accomplishments, each of them at the highest level...”

In his current role, Smith oversees tax account administration, audit, compliance, taxpayer services, property tax and special programs divisions. He also is leading development of organizational performance standards for the agency.

The medal has been awarded annually since 2004 in memory of Wade Anderson, a Texas tax administrator who died in 2003.

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