

GENERAL FUND REVENUE UPDATE FISCAL 2010

A Report Prepared for the
Revenue and Transportation Interim Committee
Legislative Finance Committee

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide the committees with general fund revenue collection data through October FY 2009 compared to October FY 2010. This and future updates are intended to provide the most recent information on general fund revenue collections as we proceed through the 2011 biennium. These reports, most of the time, will only highlight the significant revenue sources with a brief explanation of what trends may be developing.

As a reminder, during the regular legislative session, our office recommended to the 61st Legislature that the general fund revenue estimates be decreased by \$292.6 million for fiscal 2009, 2010, and 2011. The House Taxation Committee adopted these recommendations and included the assumptions in HJ 2, the revenue estimating resolution. The reduced revenue was anticipated from major sources such as individual and corporation income taxes and oil and gas production taxes. The revenue estimates used by the legislature for the 2011 biennium have been incorporated into this report.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Total general fund revenue collections through October are showing further weakness when compared to the revenue estimates used by the 61st Legislature for FY 2010. Figure 1 shows individual income tax collections through October (cumulative) versus the HJ 2 annual revenue estimate allocated by month. As shown in Figure 1, individual income tax collections are not keeping pace with the HJ 2 estimate and are lagging the estimate more each month. Based on these trends, individual income tax collections could be below the HJ 2 estimate by \$56 to \$113 million for FY 2010.

Figure 1

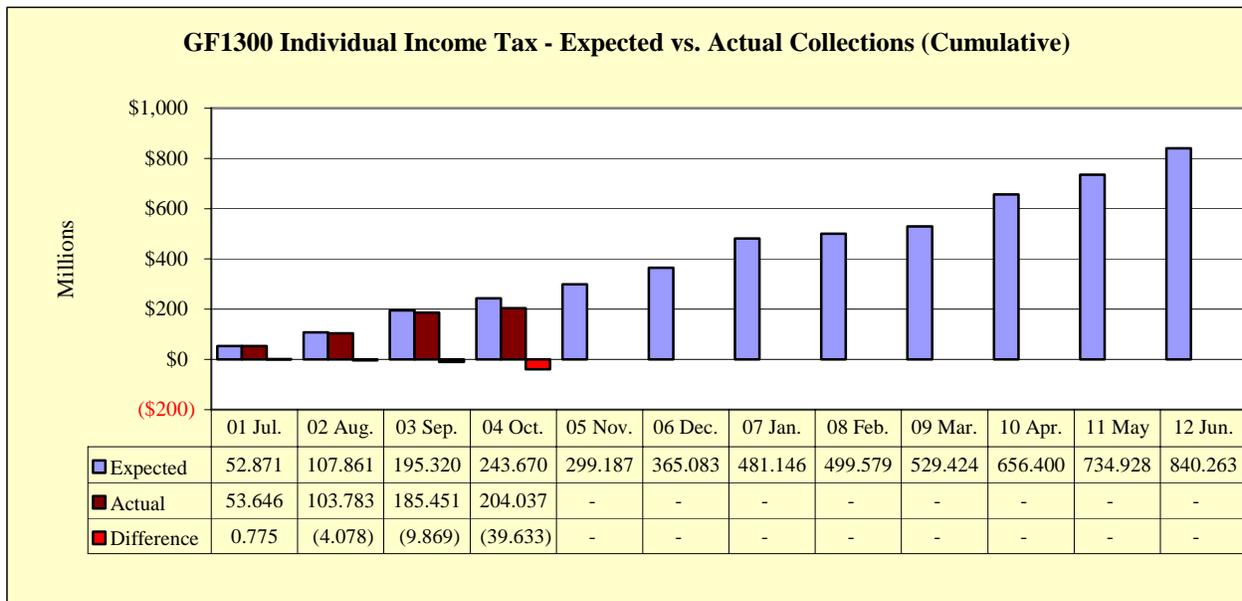
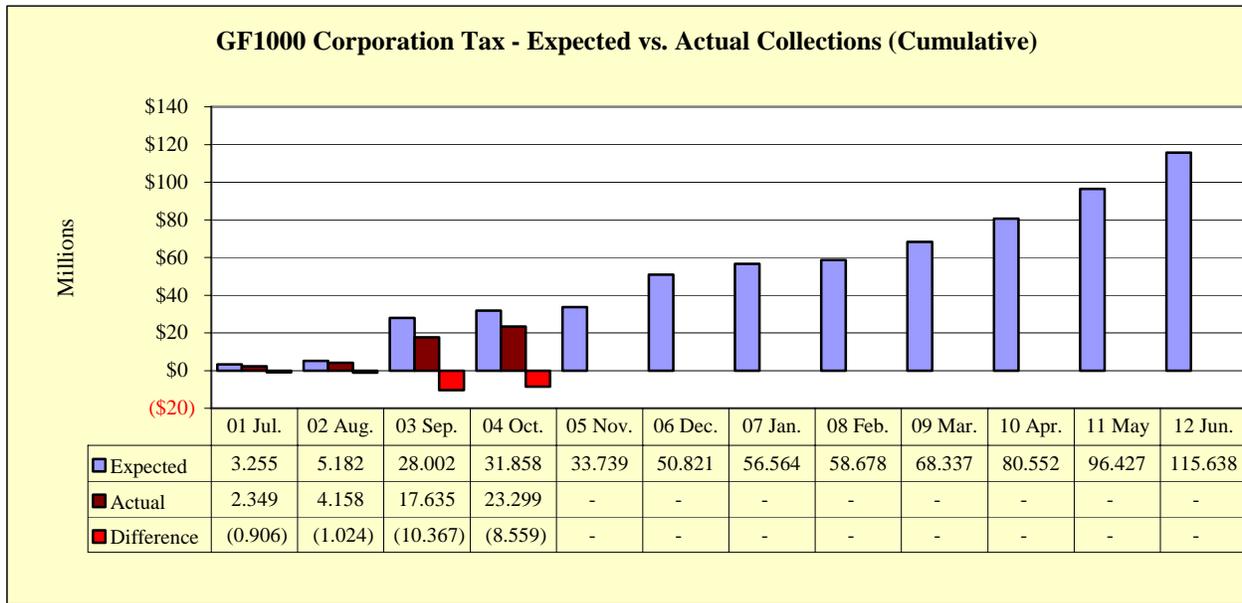


Figure 2 shows corporation income tax collections through October (cumulative) versus the HJ 2 annual revenue estimate allocated by month. As shown in Figure 2, corporation income tax collections are not keeping pace with the HJ 2 estimate but have improved somewhat by the end of October. Based on these trends, corporation income tax could be below the HJ 2 estimate by \$9 to \$30 million for FY 2010.

Figure 2



When the potential shortfall from individual and corporation income taxes is combined with the potential excess from oil and gas production taxes, total general fund revenues could be below the HJ 2 revenue estimate for FY 2010 by \$51 to \$129 million. The 61st Legislature adopted a policy to maintain a higher general fund ending fund balance for the 2011 biennium (\$282.4 million) in the event of revenue shortfalls. The potential shortfalls discussed above, however, could erode this balance significantly especially if the shortages are closer to the high end of the range and they continue into FY 2011. In addition, the 2011 biennium budget was designed to be structurally balanced by FY 2011 (negative \$4.4 million). If revenue shortfalls continue into FY 2011, the structural imbalance widens making the task of balancing the 2013 biennium budget much more difficult.

GENERAL FUND REVENUE UPDATE

FISCAL 2010 REVENUE COLLECTIONS

Based on information recorded on the Statewide Accounting, Budgeting, and Human Resource System (SABHRS), total general fund receipts through October for FY 2010 were \$331.4 million as shown in Figure 3. This compares to \$424.2 million collected through October for FY 2009. This is a decline in collections from FY 2009 of \$92.8 million or a 21.9 percent decrease. To be on target with the estimates used by the 61st Legislature, collections should have been down by only 1.9 percent or \$8.2 million after the first four months of the fiscal year.

Total general fund collections as estimated by the legislature for FY 2010 were expected to be \$35.1 million (1.9 percent) below the FY 2009 actual collections. These estimates were used by the 61st Legislature and contained in the adjusted HJ 2 (revenue estimate resolution plus impacts of enacted legislation). Most of this reduction was expected from corporate income tax, oil and gas production tax, and TCA (treasury cash account) investment earnings. Corporation income tax collections were expected to decline because of the impacts of the economic recession on corporate profits. Oil and gas production collections were expected to decline because of significantly reduced commodity prices and reduced production levels. TCA investments earnings were expected to decline because of the historical low level for short-term interest rates. Individual income tax, the largest general fund revenue source, was expected to increase as the effects of the economic recession were expected to subside by the end of FY 2010.

Figure 3 shows revenue collection and estimate data by major revenue category. The last three columns in the figure compare collections from the revenue source to the estimate contained in HJ 2. For example, corporation income tax (10th line) shows a negative \$26.4 million in the “Difference” column. This means collections through October of this

year are \$26.4 million less than the amount received through October of FY 2009 for a negative 53.1 percent difference shown in the “% Change” column. The legislature assumed collections would be down by 30.5 percent shown in the last column. This means collections are lagging the legislative estimate and will need to accelerate in subsequent months to be on track with the HJ 2 estimate.

Figure 3

General Fund Revenue Monitoring Report							
Revenue Source	Actual Fiscal 2009	HJ2 Estimate Fiscal 2010	Through 10/31/08	Through 10/31/09	Difference	% Change	HJ2 Estimate % Change
GF0100 Drivers License Fee	3,478,285	3,920,000	1,016,894.54	1,039,140.47	22,245.93	2.19%	12.70%
GF0200 Insurance Tax	50,038,468	58,762,000	17,392.04	11,990,971.22	11,973,579.18	68845.17%	17.43%
GF0300 Investment Licenses	6,461,446	6,210,000	183,519.06	678,801.44	495,282.38	269.88%	-3.89%
GF0400 Vehicle License Fee	89,334,878	92,247,000	24,684,694.92	4,515,863.93	(20,168,830.99)	-81.71%	3.26%
GF0500 Vehicle Registration Fee	15,344,744	17,970,000	4,984,785.08	768,006.32	(4,216,778.76)	-84.59%	17.11%
GF0600 Nursing Facilities Fee	5,468,766	5,213,000	898,339.69	971,199.47	72,859.78	8.11%	-4.68%
GF0700 Beer Tax	3,114,729	3,218,000	905,731.49	910,715.46	4,983.97	0.55%	3.32%
GF0800 Cigarette Tax	34,320,412	32,007,000	11,337,876.68	10,944,191.43	(393,685.25)	-3.47%	-6.74%
GF0900 Coal Severance Tax	13,028,228	10,846,000	3,277,163.39	3,128,107.38	(149,056.01)	-4.55%	-16.75%
GF1000 Corporation Tax	166,354,514	115,638,000	49,673,743.52	23,299,137.72	(26,374,605.80)	-53.10%	-30.49%
GF1100 Electrical Energy Tax	4,824,659	4,717,000	1,113,922.32	644,496.46	(469,425.86)	-42.14%	-2.23%
GF1150 Wholesale Energy Trans Tax	3,864,771	3,931,000	314,768.37	623,537.45	308,769.08	98.09%	1.71%
GF1200 Railroad Car Tax	2,099,454	2,295,000	513,505.76	54,492.86	(459,012.90)	-89.39%	9.31%
GF1300 Individual Income Tax	815,138,193	840,263,000	248,004,266.88	204,037,457.75	(43,966,809.13)	-17.73%	3.08%
GF1400 Inheritance Tax	217,097	29,000	46,184.01	29,120.70	(17,063.31)	-36.95%	-86.64%
GF1500 Metal Mines Tax	5,992,923	3,248,000	(0.01)	100.15	100.16	-1001600.02%	-45.80%
GF1700 Oil Severance Tax	100,490,971	66,930,000	-	-	-	-	-33.40%
GF1800 Public Contractor's Tax	5,929,999	4,322,000	1,981,539.06	2,742,203.78	760,664.72	38.39%	-27.12%
GF1850 Rental Car Sales Tax	2,904,340	3,182,000	856,722.87	776,456.99	(80,265.88)	-9.37%	9.56%
GFxxxx Property Tax	217,042,057	228,853,000	8,515,600.14	9,971,755.87	1,456,155.73	17.10%	5.44%
GF2150 Lodging Facilities Sales Tax	12,477,461	13,376,000	3,712,558.76	3,023,278.80	(689,279.96)	-18.57%	7.20%
GF2200 Telephone Tax	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GF2250 Retail Telecom Excise Tax	22,250,383	21,672,000	533,120.09	274,373.56	(258,746.53)	-48.53%	-2.60%
GF2300 Tobacco Tax	4,990,497	4,738,000	1,334,071.14	1,459,297.68	125,226.54	9.39%	-5.06%
GF2400 Video Gaming Tax	62,458,106	69,003,000	31,840,353.45	29,961,401.06	(1,878,952.39)	-5.90%	10.48%
GF2500 Wine Tax	1,936,052	2,043,000	499,835.44	504,078.39	4,242.95	0.85%	5.52%
GF2600 Institution Reimbursements	14,100,804	16,047,000	2,441,264.11	-	(2,441,264.11)	-100.00%	13.80%
GF2650 Highway Patrol Fines	4,179,882	4,055,000	1,114,321.94	1,050,385.78	(63,936.16)	-5.74%	-2.99%
GF2700 TCA Interest Earnings	15,506,889	7,967,000	5,369,284.95	953,489.16	(4,415,795.79)	-82.24%	-48.62%
GF2900 Liquor Excise Tax	12,650,902	16,581,000	3,972,060.22	1,234,003.77	(2,738,056.45)	-68.93%	31.07%
GF3000 Liquor Profits	7,250,000	7,039,000	-	-	-	-	-2.91%
GF3100 Coal Trust Interest Earnings	26,958,378	28,574,000	4,733,558.38	4,621,130.11	(112,428.27)	-2.38%	5.99%
GF3300 Lottery Profits	10,136,213	10,969,000	-	-	-	-	8.22%
GF3450 Tobacco Settlement	4,127,609	4,007,000	-	-	-	-	-2.92%
GF3500 U.S. Mineral Leasing	31,573,364	27,796,000	3,328,565.99	4,534,325.62	1,205,759.63	36.22%	-11.96%
GF3600 All Other Revenue	31,922,159	35,247,000	6,985,173.10	6,633,364.36	(351,808.74)	-5.04%	10.42%
Grand Total	1,807,967,633	1,772,915,000	424,190,817.38	331,374,885.14	(92,815,932.24)	-21.88%	-1.94%

* plus impacts of enacted legislation

DISCUSSION OF SELECTED SOURCES FOR FISCAL 2010

The following section of the report addresses some of the key general fund revenue sources that were monitored closely during the regular session. These sources are individual income tax, corporation income tax, treasury cash account (TCA) interest earnings, and oil and gas production tax. These sources were chosen because of their vulnerability to the economic recession and the discussion these sources received during the past legislative session. A discussion on video gaming tax revenue was dropped from this report since no new information was available since the October report. This section of the report also includes a discussion on sources that are showing very unusual collection patterns. These sources are insurance taxes, vehicle fees/taxes, and liquor excise taxes. As discussed in the September report, cigarette taxes and US mineral leasing revenues were lagging the HJ 2 estimate because of an accrual and revenue deposit timing issues, respectively. These issues have been resolved and the revenues are now more comparable to historical patterns.

Individual Income Tax

Based on October accounting data, net individual income tax collections for FY 2010 (gross collections less refunds) were 17.7 percent below net collections for FY 2009 or a decrease of \$44.0 million. The 61st Legislature assumed that

revenues would increase by 3.1 percent from the FY 2009 amount or an increase of \$25.1 million. This increase was anticipated because the effects of the economic recession were expected to subside by the end of FY 2010.

Figure 4 shows the accounting details through October of individual income tax collections of FY 2010 compared to the same period for FY 2009. Since withholding tax collections are a proxy of total wage growth, the negative 3.9 percent growth from last year indicates total wages have declined from the level observed a year ago. Withholding payments for mineral royalties have declined by \$1.6 million or 35.6 percent. This decline was anticipated because of the significant reduction in Montana's wellhead oil price.

Figure 4

Individual Income Tax Comparison				
Revenue Code & Description	Through 10/31/2008	Through 10/31/2009	Difference	Percent Change
	Fiscal 2009	Fiscal 2010		
510101 Withholding Tax	192,653,614.96	185,060,538.03	(7,593,076.93)	-3.94%
510482 Mineral Royalty WH Tax	4,428,515.53	2,852,375.04	(1,576,140.49)	-35.59%
510102 Estimated Tax	81,018,724.50	64,379,206.87	(16,639,517.63)	-20.54%
510103 Current Year I/T	12,136,515.22	6,292,381.40	(5,844,133.82)	-48.15%
510105 Income Tax - Audit Collections	5,655,305.00	7,942,695.00	2,287,390.00	40.45%
510106 Income Tax Refunds	(47,888,408.33)	56,872,233.58	104,760,641.91	-218.76%
Income Tax Refunds Adjustment	<u>0.00</u>	<u>(119,361,972.17)</u>	<u>(119,361,972.17)</u>	
Totals	\$248,004,266.88	\$204,037,457.75	(\$43,966,809.13)	-17.73%
Percent of Actual/Estimated	28.62%	24.28%		

Estimated payments, due October 15th, were \$16.6 million (20.5 percent) below last year. During the last two quarters of FY 2009, estimated payments declined by 14.5 and 33.6 percent, respectively. Review of the first quarter FY 2010 payments shows a continuation of this trend. With a substantial drop in the equity markets during late 2008 and early 2009, historical low interest rates, and reductions in corporate profitability, it is not surprising to observe a significant reduction in estimated payments. Estimated payments and current year payments are a good indicator that taxpayers' non-wage components of income are changing relative to economic conditions.

Figure 4 shows two lines for individual income tax refunds. Because of a legislative audit recommendation, the DOR processed a refund payable adjustment in October that was previously recorded during the fiscal year-end adjustment period. By including the adjustment amount in Figure 4, total collections between fiscal years continue to be an "apples to apples" comparison. Without the refund adjustment amount, refunds through October would have shown a positive \$56.9 million, an amount not comparable to the negative \$47.9 million shown for FY 2009. This refund adjustment will be shown in subsequent months to maintain comparability with last year.

Since October 15th was the due date for tax returns that were extended beyond the April 15th due date, refunds issued by the end of October are an indication of under or overpayment of taxes during FY 2009. As stated in previous reports, if refunds during this period were unusually high, this would indicate taxpayers overpaid during FY 2009 thereby inflating actual receipts for FY 2009. Conversely, if refunds were unusually low, taxpayers underpaid during FY 2009 which would mean FY 2009 receipts were understated. As of the end of October, refunds (the two refund lines combined) were \$62.5 million or \$14.6 million (30.5 percent) above the same period for FY 2009. This suggests that taxpayers overpaid their taxes during FY 2009 thereby overstating FY 2009 total collections. This is an unfavorable trend for FY 2010 since overpayments in FY 2009 means the income base is lower than originally assumed by the legislature. If the income base is lower, then growth from FY 2009 to FY 2010 needs to be stronger in order to achieve the HJ 2 estimate.

When all of the accounting categories are added together, total individual income tax collections through October are \$44.0 million below FY 2009 amounts. Since total FY 2010 collections were estimated to be \$25.1 million above FY 2009 amounts, the HJ 2 individual income tax estimate for FY 2010 appears to be too optimistic. While four months of accounting information is available, it is still difficult to project how much the estimate could vary from the HJ 2 estimate. By using several extrapolation techniques however, individual income tax revenues could be below the HJ 2 estimate anywhere from \$56 million to \$113 million just for FY 2010. The low end of the range assumes an economic

rebound beginning early calendar 2010 while the high end of the range assumes an economic rebound beginning mid-year 2010. Further data on withholding and estimated payments should help narrow this range.

Corporation Income Tax

Based on October accounting data, net corporation income tax collections for FY 2010 (gross collections less refunds) were 53.1 percent below net collections for FY 2009 or a decrease of \$26.4 million. The 61st Legislature assumed that revenues would decrease by 30.5 percent from the FY 2009 amount or a decrease of \$50.7 million. This decrease was anticipated because of the effects the economic recession on corporate profitability for both state and national corporations.

As pointed out in the September report, part of the strength in FY 2009 collections was explained by the auditing efforts of the DOR and the resulting unusual high audit collections. Total audit collections were \$31.0 million in FY 2009 compared to \$16.9 million in FY 2008. When audit collections are removed from FY 2008 and 2009 totals, then the trend for the remaining collections are a negative 5.7 percent, a decline rate greater than estimated in HJ 2 for FY 2009.

Estimated payments, due October 15th, were \$19.1 million (47.8 percent) below last year. Further review of tax payment detail by corporation provides some additional insight to estimated payments. Similar to individual income tax, estimated payments for the last two quarters of FY 2009 declined by 34.9 and 41.3 percent, respectively. Review of the first four months of FY 2010 payments shows a continuation of this trend. With announced job layoffs, business closures and/or cutbacks, significant consumer spending reductions, and construction plummeting, it is not surprising to observe a significant reduction in estimated payments.

Figure 5

Corporation Income Tax Comparison				
Revenue Code & Description	Through 10/31/2008 Fiscal 2009	Through 10/31/09 Fiscal 2010	Difference	Percent Change
510501 Corporation Tax	7,813,398.39	6,144,701.51	(1,668,696.88)	-21.36%
510505 Corporation Tax Estimated Paym	39,962,606.71	20,862,800.56	(19,099,806.15)	-47.79%
510502 Corporation Tax Refunds	(3,523,357.58)	(2,584,896.70)	938,460.88	-26.64%
510503 Corporation Tax-Audit Collect.	5,421,096.00	1,704,289.00	(3,716,807.00)	-68.56%
Corporation Tax Refunds Adjustment	<u>0.00</u>	<u>(2,827,756.65)</u>	<u>(2,827,756.65)</u>	
Totals	\$49,673,743.52	\$23,299,137.72	(\$26,374,605.80)	-53.10%
Percent of Actual/Estimated	30.98%	20.15%		

Figure 5 shows two lines for corporation income tax refunds. Because of a legislative audit recommendation, the DOR processed a refund payable adjustment in October that was previously recorded during the fiscal year-end adjustment period. By including the adjustment amount in Figure 5, total collections between fiscal years continue to be an “apples to apples” comparison. Without the refund adjustment amount, refunds through October would have shown a negative \$2.6 million instead of a negative \$5.4 million (the two refund amounts added together). By showing the refund adjustment, total refunds have increased by 53.6 percent compared to last year. Since November 15th is the due date for extended returns, next month refunds should indicate if there was an under or overpayment of taxes in FY 2009.

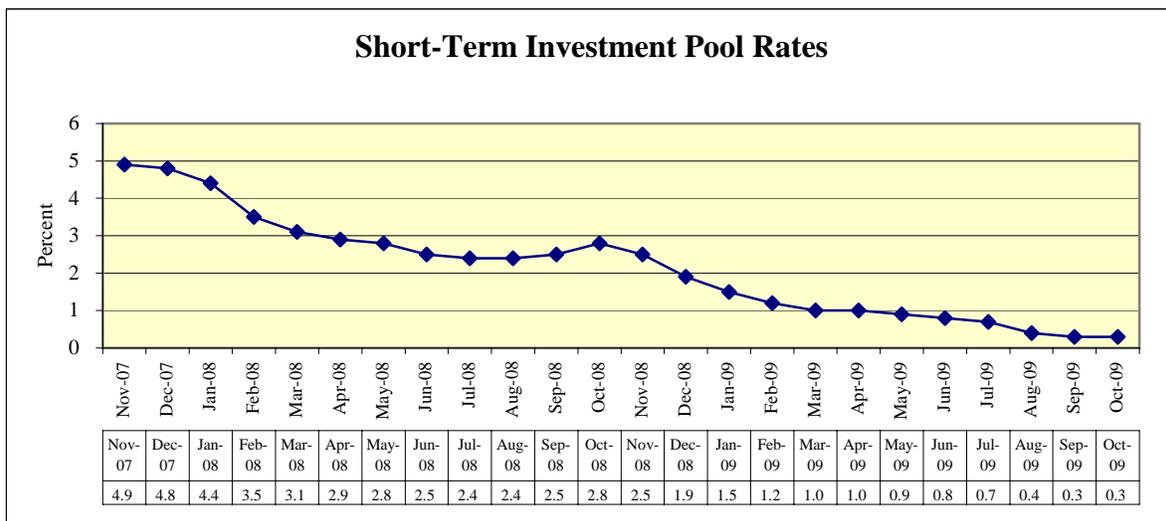
When all of the accounting categories are added together, total corporation income tax collections through October are \$26.4 million below FY 2009 amounts (53.1percent). Since total FY 2010 collections were estimated to be \$50.7 million (30.5 percent) below FY 2009 amounts, the HJ 2 corporation income tax estimate for FY 2010 appears to be too optimistic. While four months of accounting information is available, it is still difficult to project how much the estimate could vary from the HJ 2 estimate. By using several extrapolation techniques however, corporation income tax revenues could be below the HJ 2 estimate anywhere from \$9 million to \$30 million just for FY 2010. The low end of the range assumes an economic rebound beginning early calendar 2010 while the high end of the range assumes an economic rebound beginning mid-year 2010. Further data on refunds and estimated payments should help narrow this range.

Treasury Cash Account (TCA) Interest Earnings

Based on October accounting data, TCA interest earnings for FY 2010 were 82.2 percent below collections for FY 2009 or a decrease of \$4.4 million. The 61st Legislature assumed that revenues would decrease by 48.6 percent from the FY 2009 amount or a decrease of \$7.5 million. This decrease was anticipated because of the reduced rate of return anticipated for short-term securities.

For FY 2009, collections from this source were below estimate by \$1.0 million or 6.1 percent. This trend appears to be much worse in FY 2010 as collections are down 82.2 percent when October's collections of FY 2009 are compared to the same period of FY 2010. Since TCA interest earnings are based on cash available for investment and the rate of return for short-term securities, reduced earnings are primarily due to reduced short-term interest rates. Figure 6 shows the average monthly rate of return received on the short-term investment pool (STIP) as published by the Board of Investments since November 2007. Short-term rates have plummeted from 4.9 percent in November 2007 to 0.3 percent in October 2009.

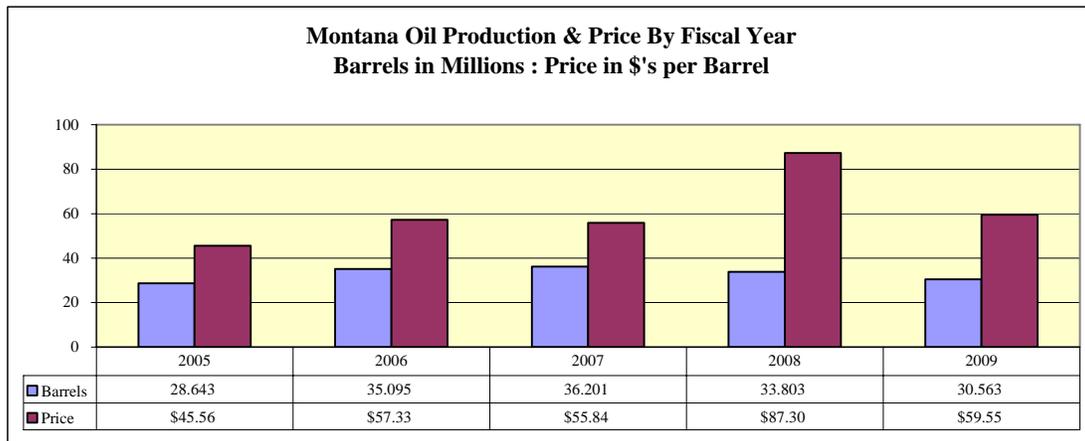
Figure 6



Oil and Gas Production Tax

Oil and natural gas production taxes are one of the major sources of revenue that could exceed the HJ 2 estimate. As shown in Figure 3 (page 3), oil and gas production tax collections through October are zero for FY 2009 and 2010. This is a normal condition because tax returns are not due until 60 days after the end of the quarter and the Department of Revenue (DOR) has 60 days after receipt of the return to do the necessary processing for determining state and local revenue distribution. The most recent tax return data as filed with the DOR, however, does provide information on production and wellhead prices for FY 2009. As shown in Figure 6a, oil production in Montana was 30.6 million barrels at an average price of \$59.55 per barrel for FY 2009. The estimates contained in HJ 2 were for production to be 30.1 million barrels at an average price of \$54.36 per barrel. Using the production estimate contained in HJ 2 for FY 2010 (27.5 million barrels) and a price assumption of \$60 per barrel (approximate current price), general fund oil production tax revenue in FY 2010 would exceed the HJ 2 estimate by approximately \$30 million. General fund natural gas production tax, on the other hand, could be below the HJ 2 estimate by as much as \$16 million. Natural gas production and prices are currently well below the HJ 2 assumptions for FY 2010. When combined, oil and natural gas production revenue could be \$14 million above the HJ 2 estimate for FY 2010.

Figure 6a



Unusual Collection Patterns

As shown in Figure 3, several sources of revenue are showing unusual collection patterns. Some of the larger sources are insurance taxes, vehicle fees/taxes, and liquor excise taxes.

Insurance Taxes

The insurance tax collection variation is due to the timing of deposits this year versus previous years. Historically, the first estimated payment for insurance taxes is deposited either in October or November. As shown in Figure 7, the first estimated payment for FY 2007 was recorded in October while the first payment was recorded in November for FY 2008 and FY 2009. This fiscal year, the first estimated payment was deposited in September. It should be noted that collections shown for FY 2010 reflect the reduced insurance tax deposits to the general fund because of the passage of Initiative 155 and the subsequent modification of statute in HB 676 by the 61st Legislature. Initiative 155 allocated 33 percent of the insurance tax to the Healthy Montana Kids account. HB 676, enacted after Initiative 155, reduced the insurance tax distribution to the Healthy Montana Kids account from 33 percent to 16.67 percent and allocated the difference to the general fund. This legislation was effective July 1, 2009.

Figure 7
Insurance Tax Collections

Month	Actual FY 2007	Actual FY 2008	Actual FY 2009	Actual FY 2010
01 Jul.	-	-	-	85,036.88
02 Aug.	17,351.87	142,074.46	(66,186.21)	426,556.78
03 Sep.	706,428.30	523,190.61	10,629.00	11,448,689.03
04 Oct.	11,847,042.80	(64.05)	72,949.25	30,688.53
05 Nov.	<u>551,560.59</u>	<u>13,221,557.58</u>	<u>14,049,612.52</u>	<u>Unknown</u>
Total	\$13,122,383.56	\$13,886,758.60	\$14,067,004.56	\$11,990,971.22

Vehicle Fees/Taxes

During September, our office contacted the Department of Justice (DOJ) regarding vehicle fees/taxes. At that time, DOJ personnel indicated that the interface between MERLIN (the new DOJ vehicle system) and SABHRS was not totally working correctly. DOJ personnel assured LFD staff that by the end of October, general fund collections for motor vehicle fees/taxes would be adjusted to reflect correct collections to date. Near the end of October, DOJ staff contacted our office to inform us of further unresolved issues and that the correcting adjustments would not be

completed by the end of October. As shown in Figure 8, total vehicle fees/taxes are \$24.4 million below last year as of the end of October. Our concern, at this time, is that staff can not adequately inform the legislature of a potential deficit/excess from a source of revenue estimated to generate over \$110 million in FY 2010. This issue will be researched further by staff during November.

Figure 8
Vehicle Fee/Tax Collections and Estimates

Revenue Category	Actual FY 2009	HJ 2 Estimate FY 2010	Through Oct. FY 2009	Through Oct. FY 2010	Change
GF0400 Vehicle License Fee	89,334,878	92,247,000	24,684,694.92	4,515,863.93	(20,168,830.99)
GF0500 Vehicle Registration Fee	15,344,744	17,970,000	4,984,785.08	768,006.32	(4,216,778.76)
Total Vehicle Fees/Taxes	\$104,679,622	\$110,217,000	\$29,669,480.00	\$5,283,870.25	(\$24,385,609.75)

Liquor Excise Taxes

Liquor excise tax collections through October 2009 are not comparable to the same period of 2008. This is because of an accounting procedure change implemented by the DOR due to an audit recommendation by the Legislative Auditor. Our office requested the Legislative Audit Division (LAD) to review the procedures implemented by the department to determine whether these changes conform to appropriate accounting principles. LAD has reviewed these procedures and has discussed their findings with DOR personnel. At this time, LAD and DOR staffs are still discussing the issue. LFD staff will monitor this issue during November.

In conclusion, the unusual collection patterns from all these sources could account for \$12 to \$15 million through October. If the lag is due to accounting, timing, and computer system issues and not economic reasons, then total general fund collections would be closer to HJ 2 expectations. Our office will continue to research each of these issues further before the next report is issued in early December.

SUMMARY

Total general fund revenue collections through October for FY 2010 are below the same period of FY 2009 by \$92.8 million or 21.9 percent. The 61st Legislature assumed revenue would decline by only 1.9 percent from FY 2009 to FY 2010 or \$35.1 million. This means that total future collections must improve by a net \$57.7 million in subsequent months to be on track with the HJ 2 estimate for FY 2010.

The focus of this analysis was on individual income tax, corporation income tax, TCA interest earnings, oil and gas production tax, and sources with unusual collection patterns. Since individual income tax is the predominate source of revenue in the general fund account, a small percentage change in this source can have a significant impact on total general fund revenues. As detailed in the report, however, collection data for four months of the fiscal year is somewhat inadequate to draw a finite conclusion on the future collection patterns for FY 2010. Using several different extrapolation techniques indicates individual and corporation income tax revenues could be below the HJ 2 estimate anywhere from \$65 to \$143 million for FY 2010. As specified earlier in the report, this range is dependent on assumptions about the timing of an economic rebound. Further data on payment types (withholding, estimated, refunds) should help narrow this range. Conversely, oil and gas production tax revenue could exceed the HJ 2 estimate by as much as \$14 million if prices remain at \$60 per barrel and production does not fall below the HJ 2 estimate. Close monitoring by LFD staff is imperative to ensure that the legislature remains fully informed of these revenue trends as we proceed through the biennium.

The previous reports indicated that collections were lagging expectations and that the lag in collections would have to be “made up” in subsequent months in order to achieve the HJ 2 estimated level. Collections through October have not improved and are considerably worse than indicated in previous reports. It should be noted however, that the lag in collections from vehicle fees/taxes and liquor excise taxes could account for \$24 to \$27 million of the reduced collections. However, an accelerated deposit timeframe for insurance tax collections increased total general fund

collections by almost \$12 million. The net change sum (decreases plus increases) among these three sources is between \$12 and \$15 million. Staff will continue to research each of these issues and any other issues before the next report is issued in early December. That report will highlight collections through the end of November.

Attachment 1 and 2 are new pages added to the monthly updates on general fund revenue collections. Attachment 1 shows a variety of important economic and revenue indicators for Montana. For example, if you are interested in price and production statistics for Montana's natural resource industry, this document shows oil, coal, and natural gas data for the last completed two years. For each statistic shown, the data source, measurement unit, whether the information is by calendar or fiscal year, an amount for 2008 and 2009, change amount, and percentage change is provided. The purpose of this information is to provide the reader with some relevant data on Montana's economic climate.

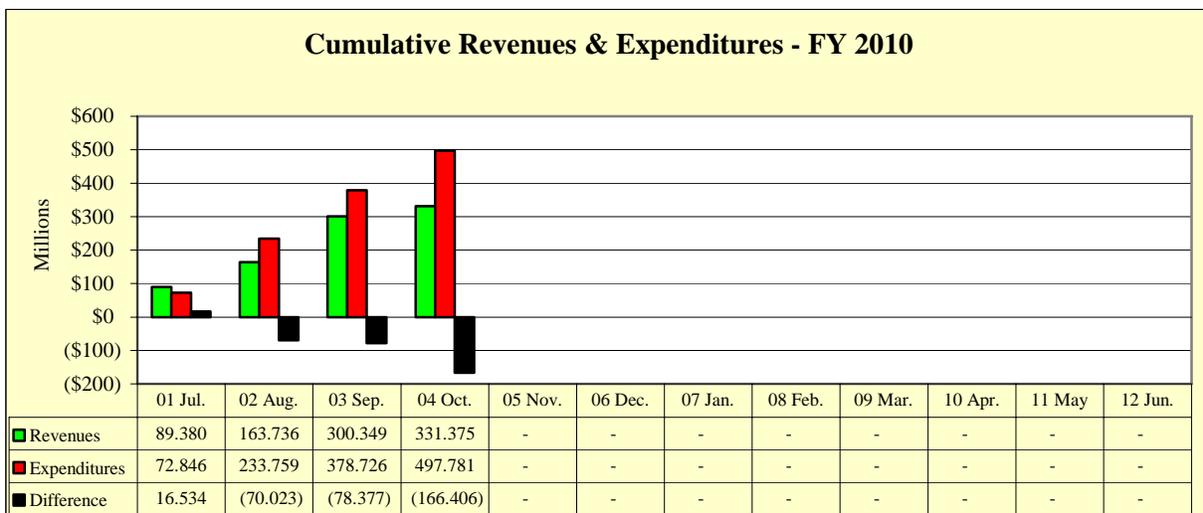
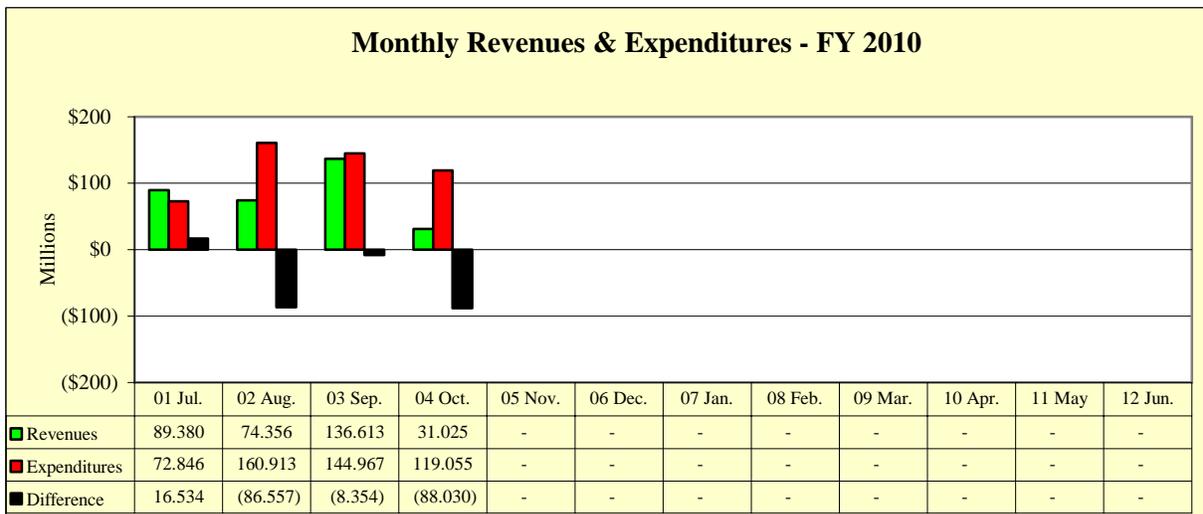
Attachment 2 shows a summary of the general fund cash and fund balance flow by month, current year revenue collections and disbursements by month, and cumulative current year revenue collections and disbursements by month. These summaries provide an insight to the fluctuations in cash and fund balances as well as the variances between monthly revenues and disbursements.

Attachment 3 is a report published October 29, 2009, on the national gross domestic product prepared by IHS Global Insight (GI). As you may recall, GI is the national economic forecasting firm the state contracts with to provide economic forecasts.

Attachment 1 – Economic & Revenue Indicators

Group	Statistic	Source*	Unit	Year Type	2008	2009	Change Amount	Percent Change
General Economy Indicators								
	MT Wage and Salary Income (Q:1&2 to Q:1&2)	BEA	Dollars	Calendar	15,525,000,000	15,224,000,000	(301,000,000)	-1.94%
	MT Non-Farm Employment (Q:1&2 to Q:1&2)	DOL	Count	Calendar	443,000	435,800	(7,200)	-1.63%
	US Consumer Price Index (Q:1&2 to Q:1&2)	DOL	Index	Calendar	214.4	213.1	(1.3)	-0.61%
	MT Housing Starts (SAAR) (Q:1&2 to Q:1&2)	IHS	Count	Calendar	2,630	1,380	(1,250)	-47.53%
	MT Existing Home Sales (Q:1&2 to Q:1&2)	IHS	Count	Calendar	21,000	18,600	(2,400)	-11.43%
	MT Agricultural Cash Receipts (2007 to 2008)	BEA	Dollars	Calendar	2,646,477,000	3,063,104,000	416,627,000	15.74%
	MT Statewide Taxable Values (2009 to 2010)	DOR	Dollars	Fiscal	2,137,780,356	2,192,158,238	54,377,882	2.54%
	MT Short-Term Investment Pool (STIP) Rate	BOI	Percent	Fiscal	4.49%	1.74%	-2.75%	-61.25%
	MT Trust Funds Bond Pool Rate	LFD	Percent	Fiscal	5.57%	5.54%	-0.03%	-0.54%
Natural Resources								
	Montana Oil Production (Taxable)	DOR	Barrels	Fiscal	33,803,342	30,562,727	(3,240,614)	-9.59%
	Montana Oil Wellhead Price	DOR	\$/Barrel	Fiscal	\$87.30	\$59.55	(\$27.75)	-31.79%
	Montana Coal Production (Taxable)	DOR	Tons	Fiscal	37,404,304	35,807,130	(1,597,174)	-4.27%
	Montana Coal Price (Contract Price)	DOR	\$/Ton	Fiscal	\$8.13	\$8.78	\$0.64	7.89%
	Montana Natural Gas Production (Taxable)	DOR	MCF's	Fiscal	119,472,119	109,552,392	(9,919,728)	-8.30%
	Montana Natural Gas Wellhead Price	DOR	\$/MCF	Fiscal	\$6.54	\$4.41	(\$2.13)	-32.59%
Consumption								
	Cigarettes Sold (Taxable)	DOR	Packs	Fiscal	50,306,100	48,146,775	(2,159,325)	-4.29%
	Other Tobacco Products (Value)	DOR	Dollars	Fiscal	5,509,256	6,305,395	796,140	14.45%
	Other Tobacco Products (Roll)	DOR	Ounces	Fiscal	2,674,010	2,631,623	(42,387)	-1.59%
	Other Tobacco Products (Moist)	DOR	Ounces	Fiscal	8,776,410	8,981,900	205,490	2.34%
	Lottery Ticket Sales	SABHRS	Dollars	Fiscal	43,821,752	43,826,879	5,127	0.01%
	Video Gaming Net Income	Computed	Dollars	Fiscal	420,893,335	416,387,371	(4,505,963)	-1.07%
	Liquor Sales	DOR	Dollars	Fiscal	86,480,196	89,781,906	3,301,710	3.82%
	Beer Produced/Imported	DOR	Barrels	Fiscal	968,568	986,810	18,243	1.88%
	Wine Imports	DOR	Liters	Fiscal	10,010,357	10,600,521	590,164	5.90%
	Rental Vehicle Sales (Taxable)	DOR	Dollars	Fiscal	82,194,533	75,905,961	(6,288,572)	-7.65%
	Lodging Facility Sales (Taxable)	DOR	Dollars	Fiscal	465,614,350	440,250,160	(25,364,190)	-5.45%
	Gasoline Gallons (Taxable)	DOT	Gallons	Fiscal	495,175,969	483,073,024	(12,102,945)	-2.44%
	Diesel Gallons (Taxable)	DOT	Gallons	Fiscal	266,624,089	249,174,745	(17,449,344)	-6.54%
Source *								
BEA - US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis								
DOL - Montana Department of Labor and Industry								
IHS - IHS Global Insight								
BOI - Board of Investments								
LFD - Legislative Fiscal Division								
DOR - Montana Department of Revenue								
SABHRS - Statewide Accounting, Budgeting, Human Resource System								
Computed - Computed using collections and tax rate								
DOT - Montana Department of Transportation								

General Fund Cash & Fund Balance By Month - FY 2010				
Period	Cash In Bank Change	Cash In Bank Cumulative	Fund Balance Change	Fund Balance Cumulative
Beginning	446,407,475.56	446,407,475.56	396,334,893.75	396,334,893.75
07/30/09	(6,614,483.38)	439,792,992.18	32,120,885.80	428,455,779.55
08/31/09	(74,152,696.93)	365,640,295.25	(85,336,048.50)	343,119,731.05
09/30/09	(41,150,783.45)	324,489,511.80	(13,016,175.54)	330,103,555.51
10/31/09	5,562,359.78	330,051,871.58	38,772,830.87	368,876,386.38





U.S. Economy - Perspective Article

Published: Thu 29 Oct 2009

U.S. Economy Returns to Growth in the Third Quarter

The initial estimate of third-quarter GDP growth came in at 3.5%, better than most expectations, but not quite as strong as we had anticipated. Growth momentum will probably slow as we enter 2010, since some of the supports for growth are temporary, but no double-dip downturn is in the offing.

The Good News

- The economy is growing again, after four quarters of decline, and across most major categories of spending.
- Growth was not solely driven by the inventory cycle. Real final sales rose 2.5%, compared with a 0.7% increase in the second quarter.
- Inventories added 0.9 percentage point to growth, simply because they were falling less steeply in the second quarter. But they were still falling fast. That means there is plenty of support still to come from the inventory cycle in coming quarters.
- Consumer spending, business equipment and software spending, residential fixed investment, and exports all returned to growth in the third quarter. Consumer spending rose 3.4%, after falling 0.9% in the third quarter. Spending on motor vehicles and parts rose at a 56.3% annualized rate, due to cash-for-clunkers incentives, but that was not the whole story. Motor vehicles contributed less than half of the overall consumer spending increase. There were widespread improvements across all major consumption categories. Overall, consumer spending growth will slow in the fourth quarter, but not go into reverse.
- Exports returned to growth (up 14.7%), as did imports (up 16.4%). That is a good sign of a revival in world trade activity, even though trade was overall a 0.5-percentage-point drag on growth. We should expect trade to remain a drag in coming quarters, as the swing in the inventory cycle will pull in more imports.
- Inflation was very low. The GDP price index rose just 0.8%.

Caveats

- Growth was still heavily dependent on the federal government. Federal spending added 0.6 percentage point to growth. Some of that reflected stimulus spending, although most of the increase was in defense and is probably not stimulus-related.
- The surge in residential investment reflects increased construction and sales of single-family homes (sales generate GDP via brokers' commissions). There will be a temporary setback, at least, given the scheduled expiry of the new homebuyer tax credit at the end of November. Even if the credit is extended, as seems likely, its impact will fade.
- Nonresidential structures spending continued to decline, and still has a long way to fall.
- The increase in business equipment spending was very tentative (just 1.1% at an annual rate), and fell short of our expectations.
- Growth was heavily influenced by a surge in vehicle output. If we look at GDP from the production side, the contribution of vehicles becomes very clear. Real GDP excluding motor vehicle output rose 1.9%, meaning that rising motor vehicle production added 1.7 percentage points to GDP. We will not see similar contributions from vehicles in future—but this is not just a "cash-for-clunkers" effect that will reverse in the fourth quarter. Most of the increase in vehicle output would have happened even without cash for clunkers, since the level of production had fallen so far that inventories were being depleted rapidly in any case. On average, vehicle output will be higher in the fourth quarter than the third, so vehicles will again add to GDP.

Conclusions

- The GDP report does not dramatically change our view of the outlook for coming quarters. On the positive side, the inventory adjustment was less than we expected, which means more of an inventory boost to come in subsequent quarters. And consumer spending excluding vehicles is entering the fourth quarter with more momentum than we had anticipated.
- But there is less upward momentum in business equipment spending than we had expected, there may be some payback due in defense spending after two sharp increases in a row, and the initial strong momentum in residential investment generated by the tax credit will weaken. And even though we do not see a payback in vehicle output, it will not be adding to GDP as strongly as it did in the third quarter.
- We have been projecting fourth-quarter GDP growth at 2.6% and first-quarter growth at 1.8%, and anticipate that 2.5–3.0% for the fourth quarter and 1.75–2.0% for the first remain the most likely ranges.

by Nigel Gault

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