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Opinion

Economic ranking seems out of line

There are many surveys and indexes that measure the business climate in Kansas besides the Pacific Research Institute index mentioned in Steve Painter's article "Business group to counter tax push" (Nov. 19 Eagle). Instead of ranking Kansas No. 1 among the 50 states, as the PRI index did, the other surveys and indexes find Kansas in the middle of the pack. Several regional comparisons ranked Kansas in the bottom half. We need to ask why the PRI index is so far out of line with the others.

First, the PRI index does not seem to include data found in other indexes. For example, it doesn't acknowledge the 2002 and 2003 tax increases that were passed by the Kansas Legislature.

Second, PRI uses a different methodology that looks at taxes per capita instead of tax rates. This approach seems to favor sparsely populated, lower-income states such as Kansas. Third, it ignores the out-migration that has already cost Kansas one congressional seat.

In such indexes, a lot depends on the data measured and the methodology used. When one index is so far out of line with the others, we need to take a closer look before accepting its conclusions.

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