

Monday, November 25, 2013

## Refunds to rectify unfair policy: editorial

Refunding \$30 million in taxes that businesses overpaid will be the easiest part of fixing a longstanding, and heretofore hidden, practice at the Ohio Department of Taxation of keeping money that didn't belong to government.

Gov. John Kasich and Ohio Tax Commissioner Joe Testa were stunned to learn that, over the course of several administrations, department employees considered tax overpayments left in business accounts to be "ours."

The issue was discovered while investigating an employee, who has since pleaded guilty to felony theft. Apparently, she helped herself to these unreturned funds.

A report released on Thursday by the Ohio inspector general said that businesses were not made aware of their tax overpayments. And even those who caught the mistake could be shorted. Taxation employees played cute, sending only the amount requested, even if state records showed more was owed. After several years, the state claimed these leftovers for itself.

"When this first landed on my desk, it just took my breath away," Testa told *The Dispatch*. "How could people operate this way? We have a different policy ... It's the taxpayers' money, and we want to get it back to them."

**Read more:** <http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/editorials/2013/11/25/refunds-to-rectify-unfair-policy.html>

## The Vindicator

November 23, 2013

## More Ohio businesses to receive refunds for overpaying their taxes

By Marc Kovac

COLUMBUS -- More businesses will receive refunds for tax overpayments, as the Ohio Department of Taxation works to reverse a former office policy called into question by state investigators this week.

The expanded refund effort comes about a year after Tax Commissioner Joe Testa and Gov. John Kasich launched an initial round of refunds after determining the department had purposely not informed taxpayers of money they were owed.

"It just made my blood boil when, not long after taking office, we learned that the tax department was keeping a secret from businesses that they had overpaid their taxes and was then playing games about returning their money," Testa said. "The governor quickly charged me with putting an end to this and now we have."

**Read more:** <http://www.vindy.com/news/2013/nov/23/ohio-expands-effort-to-refund-business-t/>