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STATES IN CRISIS

Florida and Texas in jobs pissing match

By Tami Luhby @CNNMoney May 21, 2011: 12:16 PM ET

LEFT PHOTO: JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES; RIGHT PHOTO: CHERYL GERBER/GETTY IMAGES

NEW YORK (CNNMoney) -- Call it the Battle of the Ricks.

Florida Governor Rick Scott is determined to swipe the title of most business-friendly state from Rick Perry, his counterpart in Texas, which has held it for seven years.

"Watch your back," warned Scott on Thursday, announcing his plans to capture the top spot in Chief Executive Magazine's ranking for job growth and business development. Florida placed third this year.

"Florida is eliminating job killing regulation, reducing the size and cost of government, and making sure we have the best educated workforce," said Scott, who took office in January, pledging to revive the state's job market. "We have no personal income tax and are phasing out the business tax, starting with eliminating it entirely for half the business that paid it."

No big tax cuts for Florida businesses

Perry, who often touts Texas' long record in job creation, was not fazed.

"He would respectfully say, 'Bring it on'," said Katherine Cesinger, a spokeswoman.

"I am proud of our state's accomplishments and remain committed to upholding principles like low taxes, restrained spending, reasonable regulations and a fair legal system, which have made Texas the best state in the nation to live, work, raise a family and start a business," Perry said when the rankings came out earlier this month.

The survey asks more than 500 CEOs to rank states based on a criteria including taxation, regulation, workforce quality and living environment.

"[Texas] gets strong marks in all areas important for business creation, and has the second-lowest taxes in the nation," the magazine said. "The state has created more jobs than any other -- about 250,000 last year." ■

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