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# Florida Ranks 24th In New Measure Of U.S. Well-Being

BILLY HOUSE

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WASHINGTON - Connecticut is tops. Mississippi is at the bottom. And Florida is about in the middle.

Where does your state and community fit in terms of standard of living?

A new study modeled on the United Nations Human Development Report provides what it calls a "snapshot" of Americans' well-being, ranked by state and congressional district.

The authors of the nonprofit effort look at the same standards - based on government data on health and life expectancy, education and income - used by the United Nations in compiling its reports on developing nations.

The study is an independent initiative funded by Oxfam America, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, and the Social Science Research Council with additional funding from the Annenberg Foundation.

Drawing on the government data, the report

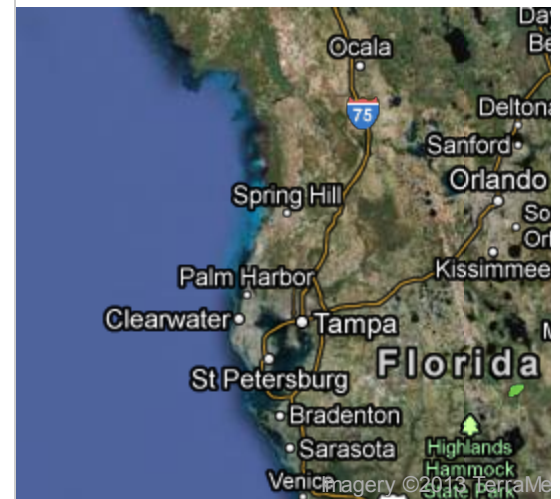
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constructs the American Human Development Index.

The report ranks Florida as 24th in well-being among states overall - and 10th in longest life expectancy.

Among the nation's 436 congressional districts, New York's 14th Congressional District (Manhattan) ranks first in well-being and California's 20th (near Fresno) ranks last.

There are wide disparities found within state borders.

In Florida, the 22nd Congressional District, which covers most of the oceanfront of Palm Beach and Broward counties, is ranked among the top 70 of all 436 congressional districts nationwide in well-being, while the state's 3rd Congressional District, extending from Jacksonville to Orlando, is ranked 395th.

Among Tampa Bay area congressional districts:

The 12th District (now represented by Republican Adam Putnam of Bartow) ranks 347th in well-being. The district includes most of Polk County, a small part of Osceola County, as well as Brandon and other areas in east Hillsborough County.

The 11th District (represented by Democrat Kathy Castor of Tampa) ranks 330th. The district includes most of Tampa and its nearby suburbs, including the eastern Bay, as well as neighborhoods south of Central Avenue in St. Petersburg and a strip of Manatee County.

The 5th District (represented by Republican Ginny Brown-Waite of Brooksville) ranks 296th. The district includes part of west Marion County. The district also covers Hernando, Citrus and Sumter counties, and parts of Pasco, Polk, Lake and Levy counties.

The 10th District (represented by Republican C.W. "Bill" Young of Indian Shores) ranks 193rd. The district includes all of Pinellas County south of Clearwater except for south St. Petersburg. It also

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covers Pinellas County beach communities from Belleair Beach to Mullet Key. North of Clearwater, it includes Dunedin, Palm Harbor and the new subdivisions of Largo in the center of the peninsula.

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The 9th District (represented by Republican Gus Bilirakis of Palm Harbor) fares the best in the area, ranking 143rd. The district spans parts of eastern Hillsborough County, northern parts of Pinellas County, including all of Tarpon Springs and part of Clearwater, and a string of towns on the coast of Pasco County, including New Port Richey.

"By combining current information with historical data, the report reveals that some groups of Americans are living 10, 20, even 50 years behind others," as defined by their relative access to education, well-paying jobs, and adequate health care, said Ray Offenheiser, president of Oxfam America.


For example, the index shows that people in last-ranked Mississippi are living the equivalent of 30 years behind those in first-place Connecticut. The 30-year human development gap between Connecticut and Mississippi is because Mississippi had, in 2005, a Human Development Index similar to the index for the United States as whole in 1990, while Connecticut's index will be the average index for the nation in the year 2020.

The report also provides other information and rankings based on gender and race.

Nationally, Asian men have the highest human development index score and black men the lowest, with the report saying there is the equivalent of a 50-year development gap between the two groups.

To look up how your state or neighborhood stacks up against others in the study or create your own local "Well-O-Meter" to calculate a wellness score, go to [www.measureofamerica.org](http://www.measureofamerica.org).

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