

# National Estate Information

## Quick facts on charitable bequests made through estates settled nationally in 2010

- 15,191 Americans left total estates of more than \$130 billion. Due primarily to increases in the filing threshold, the number of estate tax returns filed decreased from 33,515 in 2009 which left a total of \$194.6 billion.
- 3,061 Americans made charitable bequests (gifts to charity through a person's will) totaling nearly \$12 billion dollars.
- The average estate was nearly \$8.6 million.
- The average charitable bequest was \$3.9 million.
- 20% of estates included a charitable bequest.
- Of those who left charitable bequests, Americans bequeathed an average of 27% of their estates to charity.
- An average of 9% of the assets of all estates was distributed in charitable bequests.

The majority of estates file Federal estate tax returns in the year after a decedent's death. So, in 2010, most returns were filed for deaths that occurred in 2009, for which the filing threshold was \$3.5 million. Because of filing extensions, however, some returns were filed in 2010 for deaths that occurred prior to 2009 for which the filing thresholds were lower.

Please see "Facts on National Estates" for a five-year comparison of the above information.

### Notes:

1. *The total amount bequeathed to charity in Connecticut does not reflect planned gifts such as charitable remainder trusts, charitable lead trusts, foundations, etc. whose creation often results from estate planning.*
2. *Estate Tax Legislation*  
*In 2001 Congress passed legislation that gradually raised the estate tax threshold until 2010 when the estate tax was scheduled to be repealed. On December 17, 2010, the estate tax was retroactively reinstated for 2010 (but with an elect-out option) and the threshold was raised to \$5 million for 2010, 2011 and 2012 along with a decrease in the estate tax rate. In 2001, estate tax was assessed on those who died leaving a taxable estate of more than \$675,000. The threshold change dates are listed below:*

Year	2002	2004	2006	2009	2010
Estate Tax Exemption	\$1 million	\$1.5 million	\$2 million	\$3.5 million	\$5 million (or elect-out option)



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# FACTS ON NATIONAL ESTATES \*

IRS Estate Tax Return Information: Five-Year Comparison 2006-2010

	<i>Year</i>	<i>U.S. Returns</i>	<i>U.S. Average</i>
<b>How much are we leaving in estates?</b> (Average Size of Gross Estate)	2010	15,191	\$8.6 million
	2009	33,515	\$5.8 million
	2008	38,373	\$6.0 million
	2007	38,031	\$5.3 million
	2006	48,643	\$4.3 million

	<i>Year</i>	<i>U.S. Returns</i>	<i>U.S. Total Bequeathed</i>
<b>How much are those who leave bequests to charity bequeathing?</b> (Total Returns with Bequests and Amount Bequeathed)	2010	3,061	\$12.0 billion
	2009	6,242	\$16.5 billion
	2008	7,214	\$29.0 billion
	2007	7,672	\$20.2 billion
	2006	9,447	\$18.1 billion

	<i>Year</i>	<i>U.S. Average</i>
<b>What is the average amount being bequeathed to charities?</b> (Average Amount Bequeathed)	2010	\$3,911,000
	2009	\$2,647,000
	2008	\$4,018,000
	2007	\$2,636,000
	2006	\$1,920,000

	<i>Year</i>	<i>U.S. Percentage</i>
<b>How many of us who leave estates are making charitable bequests?</b> (Percentage of Estate Tax Returns Containing Bequests)	2010	20%
	2009	19%
	2008	19%
	2007	20%
	2006	19%

	<i>Year</i>	<i>U.S. Average</i>
<b>Among those who make bequests, how much of their estates are they bequeathing to charities?</b> (Average Percentage of Donors' Gross Estate Bequeathed)	2010	27%
	2009	30%
	2008	39%
	2007	31%
	2006	28%

	<i>Year</i>	<i>U.S. Average</i>
<b>How much of what we leave in our estates are we bequeathing to charities?</b> (Average Percentage of Total Gross Estates' Amounts Reported that were Bequeathed as a Percentage of All Estates)	2010	9%
	2009	8%
	2008	13%
	2007	10%
	2006	9%

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