



## TEN THOUSAND COMMANDMENTS 2016: A FACT SHEET

*Ten Thousand Commandments* is the Competitive Enterprise Institute's annual survey of the size, scope and cost of federal regulations, and how they affect American consumers, businesses, and the U.S. economy. Authored by CEI Vice President for Policy Clyde Wayne Crews Jr., it shines a light on the large, growing "hidden tax" of America's regulatory state.

The scope of federal government spending, deficits and the national debt is staggering, but so is the impact of federal regulations. Unfortunately, regulations get too little attention in policy debates because, unlike taxes, they are unbudgeted. They are also difficult to quantify because their effects are often indirect. In *Ten Thousand Commandments*, Crews compiles available data on regulatory costs and trends. By making the size, extent and cost of Washington's rules and mandates more comprehensible, Crews underscores the need for more review, transparency and accountability—for both new and existing federal regulations.

### Highlights of the 2016 edition include:

- The federal regulatory cost reached **\$1.885 trillion** in 2015.
- Federal regulation is a hidden tax that amounts to nearly **\$15,000 per U.S. household each year**.
- In 2015, 114 laws were enacted by Congress during the calendar year, while 3,410 rules were issued by agencies. Thus, **30 rules were issued for every law enacted last year**.
- Many Americans complain about taxes, but **regulatory compliance costs exceed the \$1.82 trillion that the IRS is expected to collect in both individual and corporate income taxes** from 2015.
- Some **60 federal departments, agencies, and commissions have 3,297 regulations in development** at various stages in the pipeline.
- The **top five federal rulemaking agencies account for 41 percent of all federal regulations**. These are the Departments of the Treasury, Commerce, Interior, Health and Human Services, and Transportation.
- The 2015 Federal Register contains **80,260 pages, the third highest page count in its history**. Of the seven all-time-highest Federal Register total page counts, six occurred under President Obama.
- The George W. Bush administration averaged **62 major regulations annually** over eight years, while the Obama administration has averaged **81 major regulations annually** over seven years.