Charities and Other Tax-Exempt Organizations, 2010

SOI conducts annual studies on non-profit charitable and other tax-exempt organizations. Analysts derive estimates of tax-exempt sector financial activity from a sample of Forms 990 filed by these organizations. Organizations covered by the SOI sample include those exempt under Internal Revenue Code subsections 501(c)(3) through 501(c)(9).

**Highlights of the Data**

- Nonprofit charities exempt under 501(c)(3) represent the vast majority of organizations, and account for the bulk of the financial activity for the tax-exempt sector.
- The nonprofit sector has grown steadily and significantly over the years that SOI has conducted studies. Total expenses reported by nonprofits showed a cumulative real growth of 127 percent between Tax Years 1985 and 2010. Over the same period, cumulative growth in GDP measured 66 percent.
- For Tax Year 2010, over 269,000 charities exempt under section 501(c)(3) filed Forms 990 with the IRS reporting nearly $3.0 trillion in assets and $1.6 billion in revenue.
- Due to an increase in the threshold for filing, the number of Forms 990 and 990-EZ filed by charities dropped for the first time since such data have been collected.
- Despite this drop, total assets, revenue and expenditures reported by charitable organizations continued to grow.
- Large organizations, especially hospitals and universities, dominated the financial activity of the charitable sector. These organizations received the majority of their revenue from program services. Smaller organizations relied on contributions, gifts, and grants as their primary source of revenue.