



Doug Belden  
Hillsborough County Tax Collector

**For Immediate Release – For more information,  
Contact Dale Hoffman at 813-612-6730 or 813-477-7857**

**State computer problems cause long lines at tax offices**

Tampa, Fla. (August 28, 2009) – Problems with the state’s motor vehicle computer system meant long waits today for people wishing to take advantage of lower registration and driver license fees before increases go into effect Sept. 1.

Hillsborough County Tax Collector Doug Belden said the computer system for the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles crashed around 11:30 a.m. Friday and did not come back up for an hour.

The system was sluggish all day, Belden said, and there were intermittent crashes in the afternoon.

State officials blamed the problem on the age of the system and the high volume of transactions.

On Tuesday, fees for many motor vehicle services will increase substantially. The cost to renew a driver license in a Tax Collector’s office will increase 140 percent to \$54.25 and the cost to renew a registration will go up between 54 percent and 66 percent.

To take advantage of the lower fees, Florida motorists flooded tax collector offices, which process the transactions for the state. The same is expected for Monday – the last day the old fees are in effect, Belden said.

The delays frustrated Belden, whose wait times have averaged below 15 minutes for eight years. The wait time Friday averaged more than an hour in some Hillsborough County Tax Collector Offices. At one point, there were over 200 people waiting in the Tax Collector’s Brandon and West County offices.

Belden was upset with the state for not anticipating the long lines. “This happened with Y2K and it happened previously when fees went up,” Belden said. “They knew this was coming and didn’t do anything.

“Why wouldn’t you do something knowing it’s going to be like this?”



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Belden urged Hillsborough County residents to use the Tax Collector's North Tampa office at 9309 N. Florida Ave. It's located in the Floriland Business Center at Busch Boulevard and North Florida Avenue.

Because the Hillsborough County Clerk of Circuit Court recently closed part of its operation in Floriland, people mistakenly assume the Tax Collector's office in Floriland has also closed, Belden said.

Belden also urged people to renew online at [www.hillstax.org](http://www.hillstax.org) and to use the drop boxes located outside all Tax Collector branches. Transactions done before the close of business Monday will be processed at the lower rate, Belden said.

Customers can also check out approximate wait times before heading to an office. Wait times at each Tax Collector office can be found under the "Locations" tab at [www.hillstax.org](http://www.hillstax.org)