

**By Matthew Crider, JD  
Family Wealth Protection Attorney**

The season of giving is upon us... and thanks to 2010's unusual tax laws we may see some very large gifts before the year is out! If you are considering being particularly generous this year, this article from Reuters explains why the federal government is making 2010 an exceptionally good year for giving.

Most people know that for this year only there is no estate tax. But the year is almost over, and next year the estate tax is slated to go up to an astounding 55%. The more you can afford to give away now, the less that will eventually be subject to the estate tax. However, "the incentive to give stems not just from a looming increase in the estate tax, but also from the lowest tax rate on gifts in a generation -- a maximum of 35 percent. That top rate was 45 percent in 2009 and jumps to 55 percent next year unless Congress acts."

Those last three words, "unless Congress acts," carry a lot of weight. Congress could choose instate lower and more reasonable tax rates in 2011; but right now we just don't know, and the clock is ticking to the end of this "golden year." There is nothing wrong with waiting to see what happens, but you may want to at least have the conversation with your estate or financial planner, so you know your options and can act swiftly when the time comes.

Very few people really *want* to give away their hard-earned money; but as the saying goes, you can't take it with you, and most people would rather leave their legacy to their family rather than the government.

## **About Matthew Crider, J.D.**

Matthew Crider formed [Crider Law PC](#) in 1999 so he could help individuals and business owners by providing creative solutions and be their trusted advisor and legal counselor. He serves his clients by listening closely to their goals, dreams and concerns and working with them to develop superior and comprehensive estate and asset protection plans. His estate planning practice focuses on preserving and growing wealth by providing comprehensive, highly personalized estate planning counsel to couples, families, individuals and businesses.

