

What Will YOU Say? Rapid Response To Spin

THE SPIN: "Everyone knows tax cuts create jobs."

THE RESPONSE: "Tax cuts only create jobs if the person getting the tax cut goes out and spends the money, creating DEMAND for products and services. Because wealthy people by definition already have everything they want (they're not sitting around waiting for their tax refund to buy that Ferrari), their tax cuts do not create much demand or many jobs. And "Corporate America" is already sitting on \$2.6 trillion in cash right now. They don't need a tax cut; they need DEMAND. Tax cuts don't create jobs, but they do create deficits."

THE SPIN: "Greedy unions and their bloated pensions are the problem."

THE RESPONSE: "When the middle class was strongest after World War II, 35% of the workforce was unionized. After three decades of Republican union busting and bashing, only 11% of the workforce is unionized. Claims that unions are the cause of our economic woes just don't fit with the facts. It's just another manipulation to get the ants to fight over the crumbs so we don't focus on the super-rich making off with the whole pie. Union folks with their middle-class income, modest pensions and discretionary income are probably the customers where you work. Instead of bashing unions, try joining one: Let unions help pull up your wages and benefits rather than trying to drag down theirs."

THE SPIN: "Raising the top tax rate will hurt the small businesses — the job creators."

THE RESPONSE: "Only 2% to 3% of small businesses (whose owners pass business income through to their personal tax returns) report income in the top income brackets. And many of those do not even employ anyone. To avoid paying additional taxes on top income, business owners can always choose to spend more money in their business, which is then expensed out before personal taxes are calculated. Now that's stimulative! And how about we reserve our tax incentives for small businesses that actually hire someone on American soil?"

THE SPIN: "In tough times, government needs to tighten its belt, just as families must do."

THE RESPONSE: "Economist Paul Krugman explains why the Federal govt must be the spender of last resort:



©2010
CONNECT THE DOTS™
for democracy USA
www.ConnectTheDotsUSA.com

'An economy is a very different thing from an individual family because (in an economy) we are all each others' customers. **Your spending is my income; and my spending is your income.** And if we both try to get ourselves in better shape by spending less, all that happens is we end up reducing all our incomes.'

THE SPIN: "Obama's failed stimulus is proof that government can't create jobs."

THE RESPONSE: "Obama's \$787 billion stimulus did stop the hemorrhaging of 7 million jobs and, as of Dec 2017, led to 75 straight months of private sector job growth (15.8 million jobs added). Because States were continuing to lay off teachers, police, firefighters and other public workers to solve their own deficit problems, however, the estimated 2.5 million jobs saved or created by the stimulus only stemmed the tidal wave. **Most economists warned the stimulus bill was one-third the size it needed to be to make a big enough impact in our then \$15 trillion economy. And 40% of it was not-very-stimulative tax cuts.** Worst of all is the consequences of 35 years of outsourcing: **Because we no longer manufacture much of anything in the U.S., when we get money into the pockets of working Americans, they go to Wal-Mart and buy things made in China, creating jobs over there.**"

THE SPIN: "Government can't create jobs; only the private sector can."

THE RESPONSE: "Public school teachers, police officers, firefighters, road workers, defense contractors, community health center nurses, NIH-funded research scientists, food inspectors, air traffic controllers, disaster relief workers, etc. all have government-funded jobs. **Public sector jobs are as real, necessary and honorable as private sector jobs.**"

ORGANIZED LABOR MESSAGE BOX

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>What WE say about OUR position:</p> <p>Unions and collective bargaining help balance the power between workers and management so they have a voice and seat at the table to negotiate good wages and benefits and safe workplaces.</p> | <p>What OPPONENTS say about OUR position:</p> <p>Union thugs use strong-arm tactics to force everyone to pay into their protection racket. They also unfairly inflate the price of labor. Public-sector union workers are lazy, overpaid and too costly for taxpayers.</p> |
| <p>What OPPONENTS say about THEIR position:</p> <p>Individual workers should be rewarded based only on their own hard work, skill, ingenuity and negotiating ability. That's what American freedom and individual responsibility are all about.</p> | <p>What WE say about THEIR position:</p> <p>Individual hard work and skill do not necessarily translate into fair compensation. Greedy corporations and bosses exploit desperate workers who may have few options and little power to complain or negotiate.</p> |

RESOURCES

Economic Policy Institute (epi.org)

Unions & Labor Standards Research

The State of Working America Data Library

EPI Wage Calculator (What if your wages had kept pace with productivity?)

UnionStats.com • Inequality.org • Unions4Workers (on Facebook)

Labor Unions: **cwa-union.org • aflcio.org**

"Dude, Where's My Job?": **ConnectTheDotsUSA.com**

Talking Democratic: Lakoff & Wehling, *The Little Blue Book*, 2012

©2017 ConnectTheDotsUSA.com • Updated 8/15/17

ORGANIZED LABOR

**United we bargain.
Divided we beg.**

Due to the huge power imbalance between workers and corporate owners, the best way for workers to negotiate fair wages, good benefits and safe workplaces is by bargaining together as a group. Labor unions protect individual workers from exploitation.

"If CEOs have the right to negotiate multi-million dollar compensation packages, then working people have the right to negotiate together for fair wages and benefits."

"It's time to restore some balance between management and working people, starting with making sure working people have a voice and a seat at the table."

"Every time a CEO cuts himself a bonus check for \$25 million, he's cutting the paycheck of 25,000 workers by \$1,000 apiece. If that isn't un-American, I don't know what is."

"You don't build a middle class by cutting the pay and benefits of teachers, who are struggling like the rest of us, or by pitting working people against each other."

All quotes from Drew Westen's presentation:
"Speaking American: Winning the Argument" (June 2012)



Americans can thank unions for:

- The Weekend
- 8-Hour Workday
- 40-Hour Workweek
- Overtime Pay
- Minimum Wage
- Paid Vacation
- Sick Days
- Safety Standards
- Child Labor Laws
- Employer Health Benefits
- Retirement Security
- Unemployment Insurance
- Worker's Comp
- Family & Medical Leave Act

"Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration."

— Abraham Lincoln

"Capital organizes and therefore labor must organize."

— Theodore Roosevelt

"Health care benefits and pensions are part of the pay earned by workers."

— George Lakoff

"Through collective bargaining and grievance procedures, (labor unions) have brought justice and democracy to the shop floor."

— John F. Kennedy

"When you destroy unions, there will be no standard at all, nobody left to negotiate decent jobs for the middle class."

— Senator Bernie Sanders

"(Right-to-work legislation) does nothing for working people, but instead gives employers the right to exploit labor."

— Eleanor Roosevelt

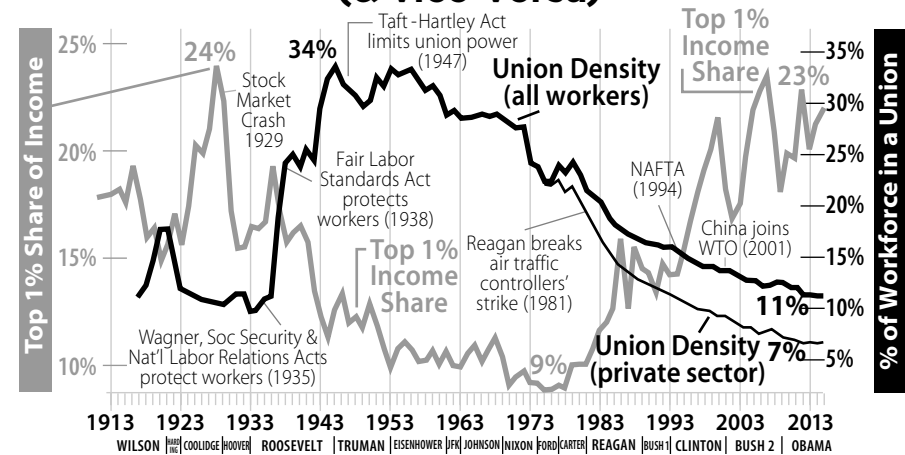
Unions: A Smart Investment

Carl worked 40 years as a repairman for the phone company where he was also a member of Communication Workers of America (CWA) union. At the end of his career, he was earning \$29/hour (up to double that with overtime pay), had good health coverage for his family and five weeks paid vacation, plus sick days.

An impatient manager once ordered Carl and his co-workers to jump in an unsafe pit and start splicing cut cable. They knew the union would defend them if they waited for the hole to be shored up.

Carl retired with a modest pension of \$2,000/month to supplement his Social Security and 401k investments. And the union continues to fight to protect his retiree health benefits. The price of union membership — just two hours of pay per month and strike solidarity — was a smart investment for Carl and his family.

As union membership drops, Top 1% takes larger slice of income pie (& vice-versa)



As union density dropped from 33% to 11%, middle class share of all income dropped from 53% to 45%.

Sources: Colin Gordon (graphs at Public.Tableau.com) for Center for Economic & Policy Research (cepr.net) Based on data from Historical Statistics of U.S., UnionStats.com & World Top Incomes Database (wid.world)

What Difference Does A Union Make?

Union

1. Wages, benefits and working conditions are protected by a legal contract.
2. A contract spells out how much each worker earns.
3. Unions negotiate raises for everyone. Members vote on it, and if they feel it's unfair, they can vote it down.
4. If you are unfairly disciplined, unions provide due process to protect against unscrupulous supervisors.
5. If you don't like something at work, you can work together with your union to change it.

No Union

1. Management can change wages, benefits and working conditions unilaterally, at whim.
2. No one knows how much anyone else earns. Unfair treatment and favoritism exist.
3. If you want a raise, you must plead your case to a supervisor or manager.
4. As an at-will employee, if you are unfairly disciplined, you are on your own. You get no due process or representation.
5. If you don't like something at work, you are at the mercy of management.

— Unions4Workers

MINIMUM WAGE MESSAGE BOX

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>What WE say about OUR position:</p> <p>No one who works full-time should live in poverty. Minimum wage laws protect workers from exploitation by the greedy, powerful few. Plus, when workers have a little extra money, they spend it in the economy, creating more jobs.</p> | <p>What OPPONENTS say about OUR position:</p> <p>Minimum wage laws cause businesses to lay off low-skilled workers — especially teenagers seeking work experience — and replace them with robots. No way to calculate a fair minimum: If \$15/hr, why not \$100/hr?</p> |
| <p>What OPPONENTS say about THEIR position:</p> <p>Let the free market set wages. Individual workers can negotiate their own wages based on merit, skill and hard work. If an employee wants higher wages, he/she should work harder and get more skills.</p> | <p>What WE say about THEIR position:</p> <p>How much someone gets paid often has more to do with power than hard work. Greedy corporations and bosses exploit desperate workers who have few options and little power to complain or negotiate.</p> |

RESOURCES

Minimum Wage Activism: FightFor15.org

Economic Policy Institute: epi.org

“Raising the minimum wage to \$15 by 2024 would lift wages for 41 million American workers,” April 26, 2017

“Why America Needs a \$15 Minimum Wage,” Fact Sheet, April 26, 2017
EPI Family Budget Calculator

Living Wage Calculator: LivingWage.mit.edu

Talking Democratic: Lakoff & Wehling, *The Little Blue Book*, 2012

©2017 ConnectTheDotsUSA.com • Updated 8/15/17

MINIMUM WAGE

Freedom and justice require decent work at decent pay.

Reasonable minimum wage laws protect Americans by guaranteeing that everyone who works full-time will not live in poverty. The greedy, powerful few should not be allowed to exploit desperate workers.

To support our families and our communities, we must ensure all workers can maintain a decent standard of living that allows everyone to pursue happiness and the American Dream.

When we require fair wages, workers can buy more goods and services, which in turn stimulates businesses to increase their sales and then hire more workers, continuing the virtuous cycle of prosperity for all.

It is immoral in the richest country on Earth to pay less than a fair and living wage. We must not create a permanent underclass of Americans, laboring at poverty wages so that very profitable corporations and wealthy CEOs can exploit and take advantage of them.



*"All labor has dignity."
"It is a crime for people
to live in this rich
nation and receive
starvation wages."*

— Martin Luther King, Jr

*"No business which
depends for existence
on paying less than
(decent) living wages
to its workers has
any right to continue
in this country."*

— Franklin D. Roosevelt

How to Set a Reasonable Federal Min. Wage

Analogous to setting
reasonable speed
limits on our roads,
we look at data across
the country for what
it costs for an average
size family to afford
a safe, modest rental
home, healthcare,
nutritious food, etc.
and divide that by
40 hrs/week. A good
ballpark is \$15/hr.
States and cities can
set theirs even higher.

FIGHT FOR \$15

Arizona Increases Minimum Wage Starting 2017

Proposition 206 (the Fair Wages and Healthy Families Act), which was a ballot initiative approved by over 58% of Arizona voters in Nov 2016, gradually increases the minimum wage from \$8.05 in 2016 to \$12.00/hr by 2020 (it is \$10.00/hr in 2017). After 2020, it will automatically increase annually by cost of living.

"Why I'm on Strike Today: I Can't Support Myself on \$7.85 at Burger King"

By Willietta Dukes,
The Guardian, August 29, 2013

Excerpts: "Before Burger King, I worked at Church's (Chicken) for 12 years, starting at \$6.30 and ending at just a little more than \$8 an hour... I've worked in fast-food for 15 years, and I can't even afford my own rent payments. We just want fairness and to be able to provide for our families... I know what it feels like to be truly afraid – afraid of having your children go to bed hungry, or having your heat turned off in February, or being evicted from your home... Burger King says they can't pay employees like me higher wages because it would force them out of business. Yet last year it made \$117 million in profits and its CEO took home \$6.47 million."

GET THE FACTS

- More than 90% of minimum wage workers are 20 years old or over. Average is 36 years. 28% are parents.
- If the federal minimum wage had kept up with inflation since peaking in 1968, it would be \$9.68/hr (instead of \$7.25). If it had kept pace with productivity, it would be nearly \$19.00. Instead, that extra income shifted to the Top 1%.
- Raising the minimum wage to \$15 by 2024 would lift wages for 41 million Americans (= 29% of the workforce). 40% of black workers and 34% of Hispanic workers would get a raise.

epi.org

Low Wages Cost Taxpayers \$150 Billion/year in Corporate Welfare

Walmart employees must rely on food stamps and Medicaid to survive and work at the stingy retailer. That adds up to a federal subsidy of \$6.2 billion per year — averaging \$900,000 to \$1.75 million per store and \$4,400 per employee — enabling Walmart to boast a profit of \$16 Billion.

"This is the question the Right has to answer: Do you want smaller government with less handouts or do you want a low (or no) minimum wage? Because you cannot have both. If Colonel Sanders isn't going to pay the lady behind the counter enough to live on, then Uncle Sam has to. And I for one am getting a little tired of helping highly profitable companies pay their workers."

— Bill Maher

*"When did the
American dream
become this pathway
to indentured
servitude, this
economic death spiral
where workers get
paid next to nothing,
so they can only
afford to buy next
to nothing, so
businesses are forced
to sell cheaper
and cheaper s**t?"*

— Bill Maher

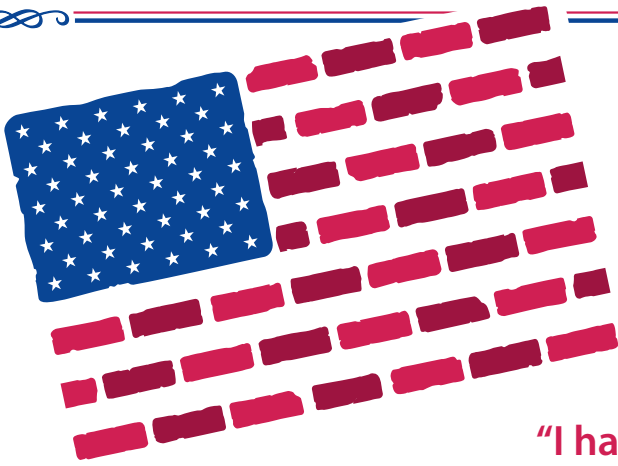
*"Money is like
manure": Pile it up
and it just stinks;
spread it around and
it makes things grow.*

— Based on quote by
Thorton Wilder

*"I used to work at
McDonald's making
minimum wage.
You know what that
means when someone
pays you minimum
wage? You know
what your boss was
trying to say? It's like,
'Hey if I could pay
you less, I would, but
it's against the law.'"*

— Chris Rock

CONTRACT FOR THE AMERICAN DREAM



REBUILD THE DREAM

**“I have a Dream.
It is a Dream deeply rooted in the American Dream.”**

— Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 1963 March on Washington

We, the American people, promise to defend and advance a simple ideal: liberty and justice... for all. Americans who are willing to work hard and play by the rules should be able to find a decent job, get a good home in a strong community, retire with dignity and give their kids a better life. Every one of us — rich, poor or in-between, regardless of skin color or birthplace, no matter their sexual orientation or gender — has the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That is our covenant, our compact, our contract with one another. It is a promise we can fulfill — but only by working together.

Today, the American Dream is under threat. Our veterans are coming home to few jobs and little hope on the home front. Our young people are graduating off a cliff, burdened by heavy debt, into the worst job market in half a century. The big banks that American taxpayers bailed out won't cut homeowners a break. Our firefighters, nurses, cops and teachers — America's everyday heroes — are being thrown out onto the street. We believe:

America Is Not Broke.

We are still the richest nation ever. But too many at the top are grabbing the gains. No person or corporation should be allowed to take from America while giving little or nothing back. The super-rich who got tax breaks and bailouts should now pay full taxes — and help create jobs here, not overseas. **Those who do well in America should do well by America.**

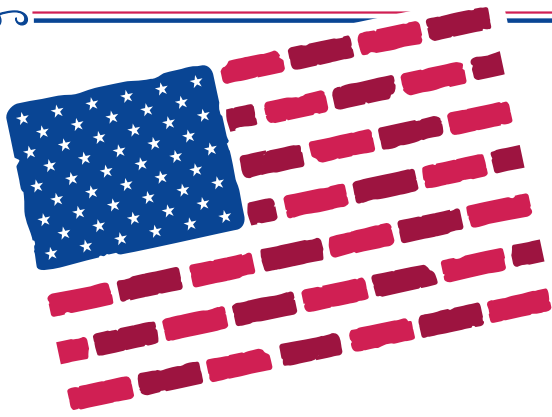
Americans Need Jobs, Not Cuts.

Many of our best workers are sitting idle, while the work of rebuilding America goes undone. Together, we must rebuild our country, reinvest in our people and jump-start the industries of the future. Millions of jobless Americans would love the opportunity to become working, tax-paying members of their communities again. **We have a jobs crisis, not a deficit crisis.**

To produce this Contract for the American Dream, 131,203 Americans came together online and in their communities. We wrote and rated 25,904 ideas. Together, we identified the 10 most critical steps to get our economy back on track and restore the American Dream.

See 10-point Contract on other side...

CONTRACT FOR THE AMERICAN DREAM



REBUILD THE DREAM

1 Invest in America's Infrastructure

Rebuild our crumbling bridges, dams, levees, ports, water and sewer lines, railways, roads and public transit. Invest in high-speed Internet and a modern, energy-saving electric grid. These investments will create good jobs and rebuild America. To help finance these projects, we need national and state infrastructure banks.

2 Create 21st-Century Green Jobs

Invest in American businesses that can power our country with innovative technologies like wind turbines, solar panels, geothermal systems, hybrid and electric cars, and next-generation batteries. Put Americans to work making our homes and buildings energy efficient. We can create good, green jobs in America, address the climate crisis, and build the clean energy economy.

3 Invest In Public Education

Provide universal access to early childhood education, make school funding equitable, invest in high-quality teachers, and build safe, well-equipped school buildings for our students. A high-quality education system, from universal preschool to vocational training and affordable higher education, is critical for our future and can create badly needed jobs now.

4 Offer Medicare For All

Expand Medicare so it's available to all Americans, and reform it to provide even more cost-effective, quality care. The Affordable Care Act is a good start and we must implement it — but it's not enough. We can save trillions of dollars by joining every other industrialized country — paying much less for health care while getting the same or better results.

5 Make Work Pay

Americans have a right to fair minimum and living wages, to organize and collectively bargain, to enjoy equal opportunity and to earn equal pay for equal work. Corporate assaults on these rights bring down wages and benefits for all of us. They must be outlawed.

6 Secure Social Security

Keep Social Security sound, and strengthen the retirement, disability, and survivors' protections Americans earn through their hard work. Pay for it by removing the cap on the Social Security tax, so that upper income people pay into Social Security on all they make, just like the rest of us.

7 Return To Fairer Tax Rates

End, once and for all, the Bush-era tax giveaways for the rich, which the rest of us — or our kids — must pay eventually. Also, outlaw corporate tax havens and tax breaks for shipping jobs overseas. Lastly, with millionaires and billionaires taking a growing share of our country's wealth, we should add new tax brackets for those making more than \$1 million each year.

8 End The Wars & Invest At Home

Our troops have done everything that's been asked of them, and it's time to bring them home to good jobs here. We're sending \$3 billion each week overseas that we should be investing to rebuild America.

9 Tax Wall Street Speculation

A tiny fee of 1/20th of 1% on each Wall Street trade would raise tens of billions of dollars annually with little impact on actual investment. This would reduce speculation, "flash trading," and outrageous bankers' bonuses — and we'd have a lot more money to spend on Main Street job creation.

10 Strengthen Democracy

We need clean, fair elections — where no one's right to vote can be taken away, and where money doesn't buy you your own member of Congress. Ban anonymous political influence, slam shut the lobbyists' revolving door in D.C. and publicly finance elections. Immigrants who want to join in our democracy deserve a clear path to citizenship. Stop giving corporations the rights of people when it comes to our elections. And ensure our judiciary's respect for the Constitution. Together, we will reclaim our democracy to get our country back on track.

For a budget that supports these policies, see the House Progressive Caucus' "The People's Budget"

See Preamble on other side...

CONNECT THE DOTS™ *for democracy* USA

FUN VISUAL BASICS FOR THE BUSY MAJORITY™



“Dude, Where’s My Job?”

Millions of Americans are unemployed or underemployed. We see the rich getting richer while everyone else is working harder for less money and going more into debt. Let’s figure out where our jobs and wages went and, most importantly, how to get them back.



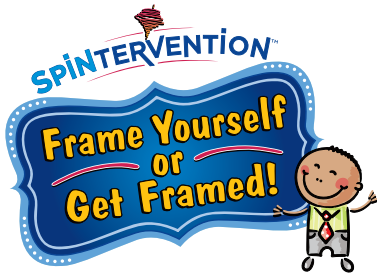
“Budgets and Deficits and Debt, Oh My!”

We hear talk of trillions over here and billions over there, of government shutdowns, of cutting \$100 billion from domestic, non-defense, discretionary spending. What the heck is that anyway? You might be thinking “Wait, I might actually like that stuff... is a \$100 billion cut going to hurt?” We’ll find the answer and tame the budget beasts.



“American Healthcare Crazy Quilt”

All other industrialized democracies when faced with challenges in their healthcare systems have found different ways to cover everybody while spending far less than America does and getting better overall results. We’ve actually blended together versions of all these “foreign” systems into a costly, confusing, inefficient, bureaucratic “crazy quilt.” Let’s examine the problems in our healthcare system and see how the Affordable Care Act addresses those problems and where it falls short. For the real healthcare solution, check out “Medicare-For-All: Saves Lives, Saves Money, So Simple.”



“SPINtervention: Frame Yourself or Get Framed!”

When we use or negate long-entrenched “conservative” language like “tax relief,” “entitlements” and “right-to-work,” we’ve lost the argument before it’s even begun. While many Americans may call themselves “conservative,” they consistently support progressive values like fairness and justice and policies like Social Security, Medicare, ending the wars, and increasing taxes on the rich. So it’s about time we fix what’s broken about our political language and change the conversation.



“Get Out The Vote: Democracy Depends On It!”

If voter turnout is a reflection of the health of a democracy, then America’s democracy is severely anemic. When we drill down on the turnout numbers by race, age and income, we start to see why our country is working better for some groups and not so much for others. Democracy is not a spectator sport: You can’t win the game if you don’t play, or if you sit out every other election. Then we’ll take a look at what’s driving voter apathy and what’s behind the recent wave of voter suppression laws sweeping the country.



www.ConnectTheDotsUSA.com
Free, easy-to-use, easy-to-share presentations & infographics

