

Sources & Links

Trying to become an informed citizen by “Googling it” is riddled with pitfalls: How can you tell the bad sources from the good? ConnectTheDotsUSA starts with the most original sources — such as data reports by non-partisan government agencies — then adds in secondary sources that are consistent with the original data but present the information in a more engaging way.

**Budgets and
Deficits and Debt,
Oh My!**



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Congressional Budget Office (CBO)

Budget and Economic Outlook: 2015 to 2025

<http://www.cbo.gov/publication/49892>

Infographics Fiscal Year 2013

Federal Budget 2013: <http://www.cbo.gov/publication/45278>

Mandatory Spending 2013: <http://www.cbo.gov/publication/45280>

Discretionary Spending 2013: <http://www.cbo.gov/publication/45281>

Revenues 2013: <http://www.cbo.gov/publication/45279>

Distribution of Household Income & Federal Taxes 2011:

<https://www.cbo.gov/publication/49440>

Distribution of Major Individual Tax Expenditures 2013

http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/43768_DistributionTaxExpenditures.pdf

Options for Reducing the Deficit: 2015 to 2024

<http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/49638-BudgetOptions.pdf>

CBO Major Recurring Reports: <http://www.cbo.gov/about/our-products/RecurringReports>

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U.S. Treasury Department

Who Owns U.S. Debt: http://www.fiscal.treasury.gov/fsreports/rpt/treasBulletin/treasBulletin_home.htm

U.S. Debt to the Penny and Who Holds It: <http://www.treasurydirect.gov/NP/debt/current>

Major Foreign Holders of U.S. Securities: <http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/data-chart-center/tic/Documents/mfh.txt>

Social Security Administration (SSA) & Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

Social Security & Medicare Annual Trustee Report Summary 2015

<http://www.ssa.gov/oact/TRSUM/tr15summary.pdf> (especially see Financial Data Chart on Pages 1 & 2)

Social Security Wage Cap History: <http://www.ssa.gov/oact/cola/cbb.html>

Social Security Retirement Age: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/planners/retire/agereduction.html>

Medicare Trustee Report 2015: <http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Statistics-Trends-and-Reports/ReportsTrustFunds/downloads/tr2015.pdf> (especially see Financial Data Chart on Page 11)

Other Reliable Secondary Sources:

Your Federal Income Tax Receipt: <http://nationalpriorities.org/en/interactive-data/taxday/>

Cost of Tax Breaks: <https://www.nationalpriorities.org/interactive-data/taxbreaks/2014/visualization/>

Effective Federal Tax Rates 1979-2011: <http://www.taxpolicycenter.org/taxfacts/displayafact.cfm?Docid=456>

Payroll Tax Rates 1937-2015: <http://www.taxpolicycenter.org/taxfacts/displayafact.cfm?Docid=45>

Who Pays Federal, State and Local Taxes in America 2015: <http://ctj.org/pdf/taxday2015.pdf>

Budget Comparisons 2016 : <https://www.nationalpriorities.org/analysis/2015/competing-visions-2015/>

Analysis of Congressional Progressive Caucus’ “The People’s Budget” 2016:

<http://www.epi.org/publication/the-peoples-budget-analysis-of-the-congressional-progressive-caucus-budget-for-fiscal-year-2016/>

Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2014: <http://books.sipri.org/files/FS/SIPRIFS1504.pdf>

Cost of War: <http://costofwar.com/>

Corporate Tax Dodgers: <http://www.ctj.org/corporatetaxdodgers/> and <http://ctj.org/pdf/15corporations0315.pdf>

What Will YOU Say? Rapid Response To Spin

THE SPIN: "The only way to save Social Security and solve the deficit is to privatize the program and raise the retirement age."

THE RESPONSE: "Social Security's Old-Age & Survivors Insurance (OASI) program has a \$2.7 trillion surplus and can pay full benefits until 2034 with no adjustment. It does not add one dime to the deficit — benefits are fully paid for by Social Security's dedicated payroll tax and interest on its bonds. The Social Security surplus is invested in U.S. Treasury bonds, which are backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. Government (the same thing that Wall Street and China flee to for the safest investment). For a future fix, just raise or scrap the payroll wage cap beyond the current \$118,500 to collect more money. Easy peasy!"

THE SPIN: "You never have to pay for tax cuts, which is just letting people keep more of their own money."

THE RESPONSE: "Tax cuts add to the deficit and debt just as spending increases do. They both must be paid for if you are serious about balancing the budget. Tax cuts don't create jobs, but they do create deficits. And not all the money in our pocket is ours. By living in this country, we all owe for many public goods that make our lives easier and safer (roads, parks, military, police, courts, FDIC insurance, product and food safety, clean water and air, disaster relief, public schools, Medicare, Social Security, Medicaid, unemployment benefits, medical and scientific research, etc, etc). And like it or not, we all owe on the long-term debt."

THE SPIN: "Taxing millionaires and billionaires more is socialism / redistribution of wealth / class warfare."

THE RESPONSE 1: "No, it's just taking back the money the super-rich have been systematically stealing from the rest of us for the last 35 years — by pushing policies that allow them to gamble with our 401ks, pensions and mortgages, speculate on necessities like gas and corn, drive our wages and benefits down, and divert our tax dollars into wars instead of schools and healthcare. Most of them didn't grow the American pie: They got rich by stealing our little slivers. There's your class warfare."

THE RESPONSE 2: "Instead, think of it as expanding the DEMAND that drives the economy. A small business owner selling \$500 barbecues would be better off with 100 people each having \$500 extra to spend, rather than one super-rich guy with \$50,000."

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THE SPIN: "Washington has a spending problem, not a revenue problem."

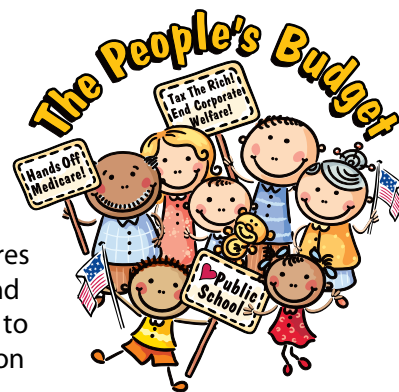
THE RESPONSE: "We have a revenue problem, too. Without even getting into all the tax loopholes that are skewed to the rich, the top tax bracket before Reagan slashed it to 50% and then 28% was 70%, and before that, it was 91%! Even with the January 2013 tax law, taxable income over \$407,000 single/\$458,00 married is taxed at only 39.6% (up from 35% in 2003-2012). And if you're a Wall Street CEO who gets most of your income from dividends and capitals gains, it's taxed at just 20% (up from 15% in 2003-2012). In addition, many U.S. corporations pay zero, zippo, bubkis in U.S. taxes. Despite the fact that many are very profitable, they even get a refund or a subsidy: That's corporate welfare! In 2009, federal revenue plummeted to an all-time low of about 15% of the economy (GDP). The last five times we balanced the budget since 1969, revenue was about 20% of GDP. Face it, we're not bringing in enough money for all the things we likey."

THE SPIN: "The government needs to tighten its belt, just like families must do."

THE RESPONSE: "While families can improve their financial positions by saving, society as a whole cannot. When we stop spending at Starbucks, the mall, the movie theater or the car dealer, it may help our family's bottom line, but it hurts the U.S. economy, which is 70% based on consumption. This is called the paradox of thrift. With anemic demand from consumers and States too broke to spend, the proper role of the Federal government is to step in as the spender of last resort to keep the economy from spiraling further down and to keep people employed. Remember, cuts cost JOBS."

The People's Budget 2017-2027: Highlights

The Congressional Progressive Caucus' "The People's Budget" reverses the damage that budget austerity has inflicted on hard-working families and restores our economy to its full potential by creating 2.4 million good paying jobs by end of 2018. It boosts revenue to a more realistic 22.0% of GDP (avg) and spending to 24.2% of GDP (avg), raises over \$8 Trillion additional revenue, invests \$5.6 Trillion in America, and reduces the deficit by \$4 Trillion over the next decade.



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Public Investments to Restore Full Employment, Expand Education & Strengthen Safety Net

• Infrastructure – repair and modernize our dilapidated roads, bridges and water systems	– \$1,975 B
• Public-works jobs programs, with emphasis on aiding distressed communities	– \$ 114 B
• State aid for first responders, healthcare and safety net	– \$ 70 B
• Enhance business tax credits for research & experimentation and green manufacturing	– \$ 106 B
• Invest in teachers and K-12 schools (\$70 B) and provide free preschool for all (\$73 B)	– \$ 143 B
• Make college more affordable and refinance student loans	– \$ 443 B
• Affordable Child Care for All subsidy program	– \$ 993 B
• Expand Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) for childless workers	– \$ 82 B
• Restore SNAP (food-stamp) benefits (\$21 B) and unemployment insurance benefits (\$47 B)	– \$ 68 B
• Increase cost-of-living-adjustment for federal civilian and veteran retirees	– \$ 110 B
• Restore non-defense discretionary (NDD) spending to historical level of 3.5% of GDP (critical investments in scientific research, energy, education, workforce training & health)	– \$ 437 B

Revenue + / Cost –
over 2017/2018 to 2027

Rein in Military/Defense Spending to Sustainable Level

• End emergency funding for "Overseas Contingency Operations" (= the wars)	+ \$ 851 B
• Slow the rate of growth for the Defense Dept	+ \$ 116 B

Restore Fairness to Individual Taxes

• Revert to 36% & 39.6% Clinton rates for >\$250k married/\$200k single	}	+ \$1,597 B
• Add new top tax brackets (45%–49%) for \$1 Million to \$1 Billion-plus		
• Tax wealth income (capital gains and qualified dividends) the same as work income		
• Revert to more progressive estate tax (\$3.5 Million/person exemption)		+ \$ 247 B
• Repeal step-up basis for capital gains at death		+ \$ 166 B
• Cap the value of itemized deductions at 28%		+ \$ 577 B
• Ensure all pass-through entities subject to self-employment tax and ACA Medicare tax		+ \$ 318 B
• Enact comprehensive immigration reform, resulting in more income & payroll tax revenue		+ \$ 301 B

Close Corporate Loopholes & Tax Economic "Bads" (Externalities)

• Eliminate the ability of U.S. corporations to defer taxes on offshore profits	+ \$1,491 B
• End corporate inversions (\$44 B) and active financing exception (\$89 B)	+ \$ 133 B
• Limit deductibility of exec. bonus pay (\$54 B), stock options (\$31 B), meals/entertain. (\$70 B)	+ \$ 155 B
• Enact a financial transaction ("Wall Street Gambling") tax of up to 0.5%	+ \$1,808 B
• Enact a financial responsibility tax of 0.35% on "too-big-to-fail" banks	+ \$ 101 B
• Eliminate corporate welfare for oil, gas and coal companies	+ \$ 145 B
• Tax carbon at \$25/metric ton; refunds 25% to low-income families	+ \$ 762 B
• Tax oil at \$10.25/barrel to fund Highway Trust Fund	+ \$ 299 B

Reduce the Cost of Healthcare

• Add a public option to the Affordable Care Act's insurance choices	+ \$ 248 B
• Negotiate Medicare Rx payments with pharmaceutical companies	+ \$ 430 B
• Bundle Medicare's payments to healthcare providers	+ \$ 88 B

*Expand Social Security (*separate from budget process)

• "Scrap-the-Cap" and expand Social Security benefits (added revenue goes to Social Security)	*+ \$1,536 B
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For more details: Analysis of The People's Budget for Fiscal Year 2018 by Economic Policy Institute, May 2, 2017 (www.epi.org) and Estimate of Rep. Peter DeFazio's Proposal by Social Security Office of Chief Actuary, April 23, 2015, pgs 1, 2 & 22 (www.ssa.gov/oact)

U.S. Tax Rates Used To Be Much, Much Higher

Federal Income Tax Marginal Rates: Historical Tables

2018 (to present): Rates passed under Trump

Single			Married Filing Jointly		
Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over	Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over
10.0%		\$0	10.0%		\$0
12.0%		\$9,525	12.0%		\$19,050
22.0%		\$38,700	22.0%		\$77,400
24.0%		\$82,500	24.0%		\$165,000
32.0%		\$157,500	32.0%		\$315,000
35.0%		\$200,000	35.0%		\$400,000
37.0%		\$500,000	37.0%		\$600,000

Note: Last law to change rates was the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017.

2013 (to 2017): Rates passed under Obama

Single			Married Filing Jointly		
Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over	Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over
10.0%		\$0	10.0%		\$0
15.0%		\$8,925	15.0%		\$17,850
25.0%		\$36,250	25.0%		\$72,500
28.0%		\$87,850	28.0%		\$175,700
33.0%		\$183,250	33.0%		\$366,500
35.0%		\$398,350	35.0%		\$796,700
39.6%		\$400,000	39.6%		\$800,000

Note: Last law to change rates was the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012.

Also, capital gains rate increased to 20% for those in top bracket.

Adjust 1.1x for CPI inflation, \$450,000 in 2013 = \$484,370 in 2018

2003 (to 2010): Rates passed under Bush 2 & Extended by Obama 2011 to 2012

Single			Married Filing Jointly		
Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over	Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over
10.0%		\$0	10.0%		\$0
15.0%		\$7,000	15.0%		\$14,000
25.0%		\$28,400	25.0%		\$56,800
28.0%		\$68,800	28.0%		\$137,600
33.0%		\$143,500	33.0%		\$287,000
35.0%		\$311,950	35.0%		\$623,900

Note: Last law to change rates was the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003.

Also, capital gains rate dropped to 15% (& 0% for bottom 2 brackets)

Adjust 1.4x for CPI inflation: \$311,950 in 2003 = \$425,550 in 2018

1993 (to 2001): Rates passed under Clinton

Single			Married Filing Jointly		
Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over	Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over
15.0%		\$0	15.0%		\$0
28.0%		\$22,100	28.0%		\$44,200
31.0%		\$53,500	31.0%		\$107,000
36.0%		\$115,000	36.0%		\$230,000
39.6%		\$250,000	39.6%		\$500,000

Note: Last law to change rates was the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993.

Adjust 1.7x for CPI inflation: \$250,000 in 1993 = \$425,550 in 2018

1991 (to 1992): Rates passed under Bush 1

Single			Married Filing Jointly		
Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over	Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over
15.0%		\$0	15.0%		\$0
28.0%		\$20,350	28.0%		\$40,700
31.0%		\$49,300	31.0%		\$98,600

Note: Last law to change rates was the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990.

Adjust 1.8x for CPI inflation: \$82,150 in 1991 = \$147,870 in 2018

1988 (to 1990): Rates passed under Reagan

Single			Married Filing Jointly		
Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over	Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over
15.0%		\$0	15.0%		\$0
28.0%		\$17,850	28.0%		\$35,700

A 33% "rate bubble" applied between \$71,900 and \$149,250 for married filing jointly, and between \$43,150 and \$89,560 for singles, the purpose being to recapture the revenue that upper-income taxpayers had saved by applying the 15% rate.

Note: Last law to change rates was the Tax Reform Act of 1986.

Adjust 2.1x for CPI inflation: \$29,750 in 1988 = \$62,475 in 2018

1982 (to 1986): Rates passed under Reagan

Single			Married Filing Jointly		
Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over	Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over
0.0%		\$0	0.0%		\$0
12.0%		\$2,300	12.0%		\$4,600
14.0%		\$3,400	14.0%		\$6,800
16.0%		\$4,400	16.0%		\$8,800
17.0%		\$5,500	17.0%		\$11,000
19.0%		\$6,600	19.0%		\$13,200
22.0%		\$7,700	22.0%		\$15,400
23.0%		\$8,800	23.0%		\$17,600
27.0%		\$10,900	27.0%		\$21,800
31.0%		\$12,000	31.0%		\$24,000
35.0%		\$13,100	35.0%		\$26,200
40.0%		\$14,200	40.0%		\$28,400
44.0%		\$15,300	44.0%		\$30,600
50.0%		\$16,400	50.0%		\$32,800

Note: Last law to change rates was the Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 1982.

Adjust 2.6x for CPI inflation: \$85,600 in 1982 = \$222,560 in 2018

1965 (to 1981): Rates passed under Johnson

Single			Married Filing Jointly		
Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over	Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over
14.0%		\$0	14.0%		\$0
15.0%		\$500	15.0%		\$1,000
16.0%		\$1,000	16.0%		\$2,000
17.0%		\$1,500	17.0%		\$3,000
19.0%		\$2,000	19.0%		\$4,000
22.0%		\$4,000	22.0%		\$8,000
25.0%		\$6,000	25.0%		\$12,000
28.0%		\$8,000	28.0%		\$16,000
32.0%		\$10,000	32.0%		\$20,000
36.0%		\$12,000	36.0%		\$24,000
39.0%		\$14,000	39.0%		\$28,000
42.0%		\$16,000	42.0%		\$32,000
45.0%		\$18,000	45.0%		\$36,000
48.0%		\$20,000	48.0%		\$40,000
50.0%		\$22,000	50.0%		\$44,000
53.0%		\$26,000	53.0%		\$52,000
55.0%		\$32,000	55.0%		\$64,000
58.0%		\$38,000	58.0%		\$76,000
60.0%		\$44,000	60.0%		\$88,000
62.0%		\$50,000	62.0%		\$100,000
64.0%		\$60,000	64.0%		\$120,000
66.0%		\$70,000	66.0%		\$140,000
68.0%		\$80,000	68.0%		\$160,000
69.0%		\$90,000	69.0%		\$180,000
70.0%		\$100,000	70.0%		\$200,000

Note: Last law to change rates was the Tax Reform Act of 1964.

Adjust 8x for CPI inflation: \$200,000 in 1965 = \$1.6 million in 2018 and \$44,000 in 1965 = \$352,000 in 2018

1956 (to 1964): Rates passed under Eisenhower

Single			Married Filing Jointly		
Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over	Marginal Tax Rate	Over	Tax Brackets But Not Over
20.0%		\$0	20.0%		\$0
22.0%		\$2,000	22.0%		\$4,000
26.0%		\$4,000	26.0%		\$8,000
30.0%		\$6,000	30.0%		\$12,000
34.0%		\$8,000	34.0%		\$16,000
38.0%		\$10,000	38.0%		\$20,000
43.0%		\$12,000	43.0%		\$24,000
47.0%		\$14,000	47.0%		\$28,000
50.0%		\$16,000	50.0%		\$32,000
53.0%		\$18,000	53.0%		\$36,000
56.0%		\$20,000	56.0%		\$40,000
59.0%		\$22,000	59.0%		\$44,000
62.0%		\$26,000	62.0%		\$52,000
65.0%		\$32,000	65.0%		\$64,000
69.0%		\$38,000	69.0%		\$76,000
72.0%		\$44,000	72.0%		\$88,000
75.0%		\$50,000	75.0%		\$100,000
78.0%		\$60,000	78.0%		\$120,000
81.0%		\$70,000	81.0%		\$140,000
84.0%		\$80,000	84.0%		\$160,000
87.0%		\$90,000	87.0%		\$180,000
89.0%		\$100,000	89.0%		\$200,000
90.0%		\$150,000	90.0%		\$300,000
91.0%		\$200,000	91.0%		\$400,000

Note: Last law to change rates was the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

Adjust 9.3x for CPI inflation: \$400,000 in 1956 = \$3.72 million in 2018 and \$32,000 in 1956 = \$299,360 in 2018

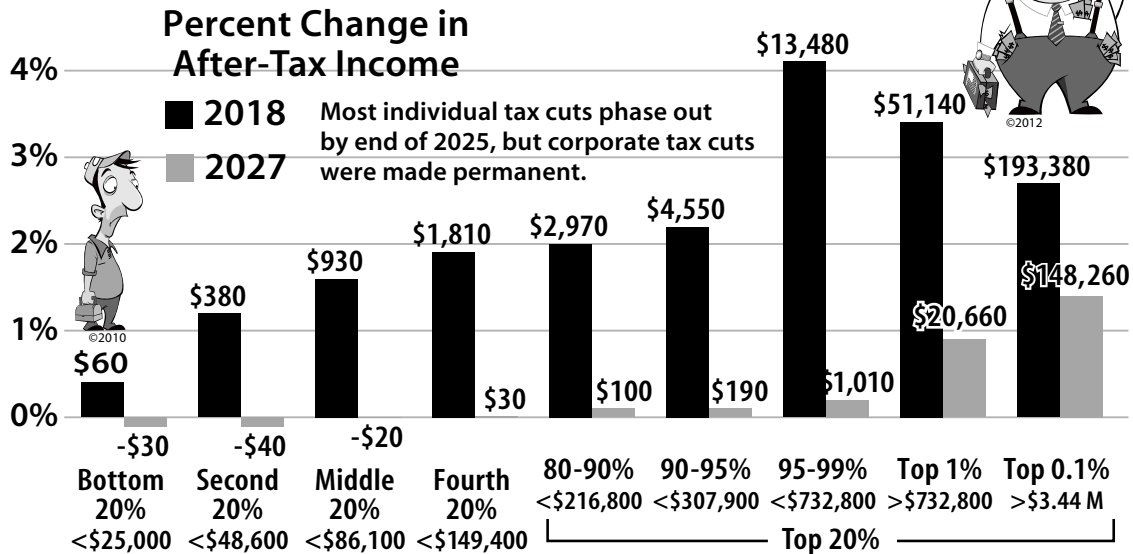


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Sources: TaxFoundation.org (Tables) & bls.gov (CPI Inflation Calculator)

Note: In 1928, right before the Great Depression, top rate was only 25% on income over \$100,000 (= \$1.45 million in 2018).

Trump/GOP Tax Cut Scam Skewed To Favor The Very Rich



Source: "Distributional Analysis of the Conference Agreement for the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act," Tax Policy Center, Dec 18, 2017 (TaxPolicyCenter.org); Income percentiles and breaks based on expanded cash income ©2011-2018 Design by Witte Design, LLC • Tucson, Arizona • ConnectTheDotsUSA.com • Created 2/18/18

Trump/GOP Con: Rich Get Tax Cuts; We Get Benefit & Program Cuts.

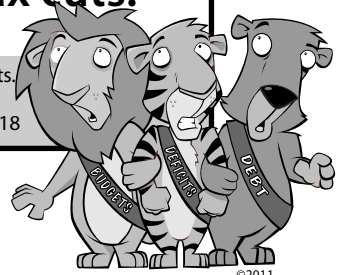
- 1 In 2018, 65% of the tax cuts go to the top 20%; By 2027, 83% of the tax cuts go to the top 1%.
- 2 Top 0.1% each gets an avg \$193,000 cut in 2018, while low-income each gets only about \$60 and middle income about \$380 to \$930 each.
- 3 Over 10 years, \$5.5 Trillion in tax cuts is offset by \$4 Trillion in other taxes/revenue (& gimmicks!), but the scheme still adds \$1.5 Trillion to the deficit.
- 4 Now Trump & GOP want to cut Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, ACA, SNAP, etc. to pay for tax cuts.

Sources: "Distributional Analysis...", Tax Policy Center, Dec 18, 2017 (TaxPolicyCenter.org); "Estimated Budget Effects," Joint Committee on Taxation, Dec 18, 2017 (jct.gov); Center on Budget & Policy Priorities (cbpp.org) ©2011-2018 Design by Witte Design, LLC • Tucson, Arizona • ConnectTheDotsUSA.com • Created 2/20/18



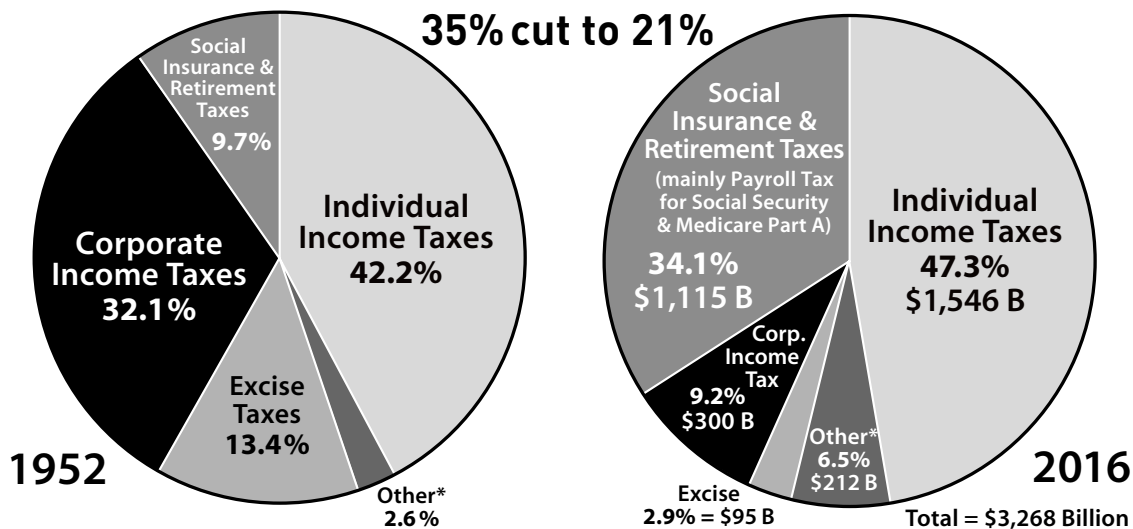
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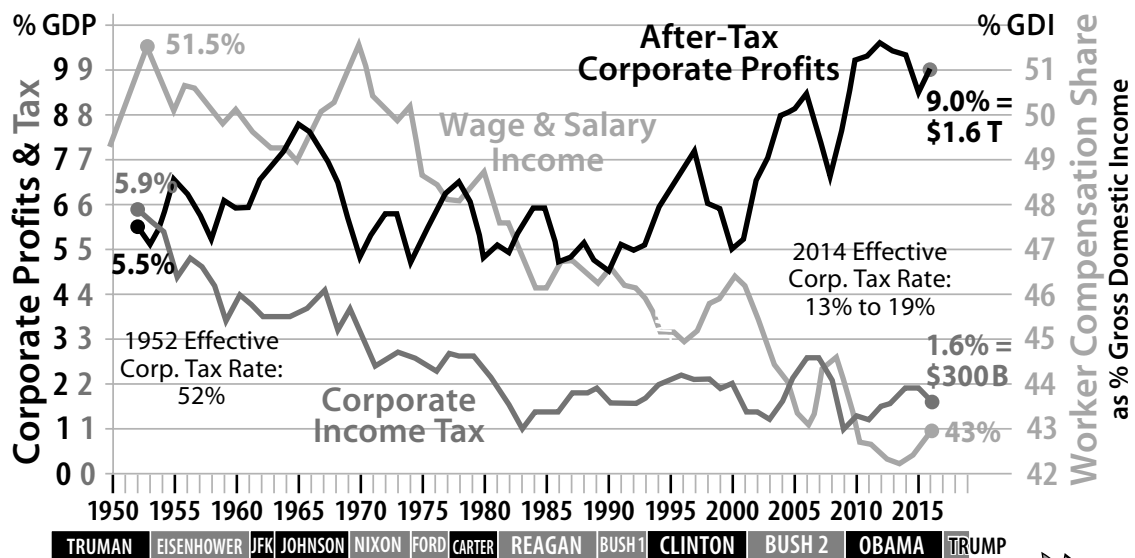
Who Pays Taxes: 1952 vs 2016

Corporations Pay Less, Little People Pay More. Now Trump/GOP Cut Corp Rate Nearly In Half:



Source: Office of Management & Budget, Fiscal Year 2018, Historical Tables, Tables 2.1 & 2.2 (whitehouse.gov/omb)
 *Other includes estate & gift taxes, customs, duties, miscellaneous fees & fines, remittances from Federal Reserve
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Corporate Profits Are Way Up But Wages & Corporate Taxes Way Down

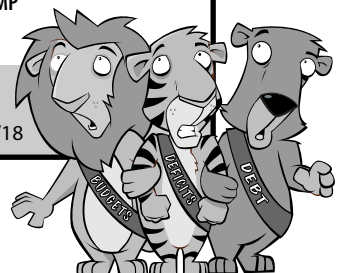


Sources: Economic Policy Institute (epi.org) and Federal Reserve Economic Data (fred.StLouisFed.org)
 based on 2016 data from Bureau of Economic Analysis & Office of Management & Budget
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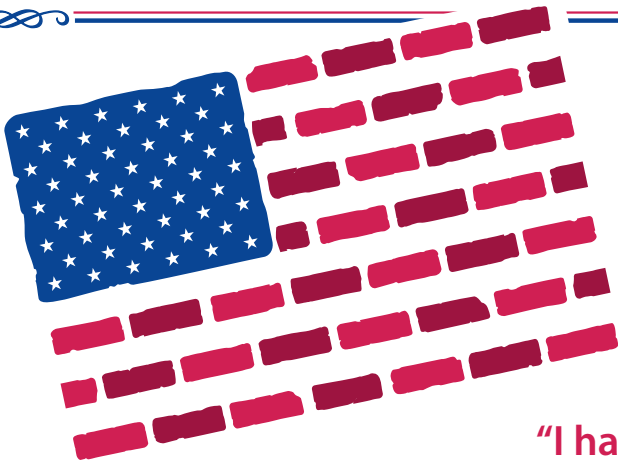
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and Debt, Oh My!**



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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.**

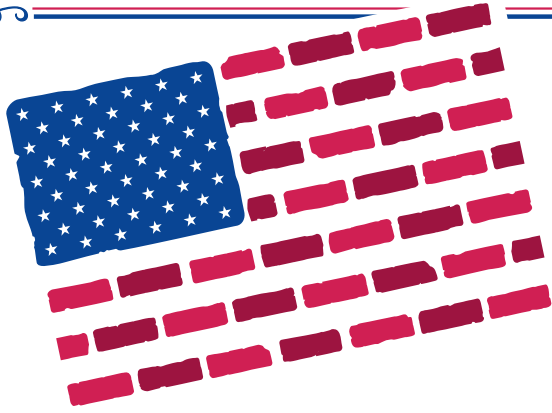
Americans Need Jobs, Not Cuts.

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.

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.



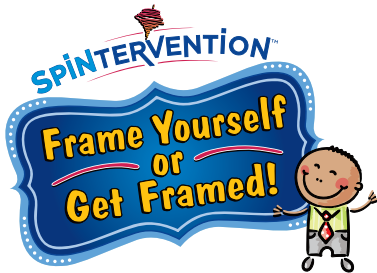
"Budgets and Deficits and Debt, Oh My!"

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.



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