



## **Unrig & Invest: Fighting For A Fairer Tax Code**

Public Citizen is working to unrig the tax code to make it fairer for everyday Americans. We also believe we must increase government revenues in order to reinvest in communities. In addition to repealing the disastrous 2017 tax giveaway bill, it's far past time to close loopholes and make corporations and Wall Street pay their fair share. And, the Internal Revenue Service must work for We the People and be better empowered to enforce the law against tax cheats.

### **1) Rolling-Back the Tax Giveaways**

As a first step, we must repeal the 2017 tax cut legislation that showered millionaires and billionaires with ridiculous handouts, while adding nearly \$2 trillion to the deficit. This is unsurprising since tax law was a product of a "swamp" of lobbyists and greased through the political process by campaign donors' brazen threats. These tax changes also contained provisions that substantially personally benefited President Trump and wealthy lawmakers, equating to self-dealing. The first step toward a fairer tax code is rolling-back these harmful tax changes and ensuring that Congress crafts a more progressive tax code that works for everyone, not just the rich and corporations.

### **2) Ensuring Corporations & Wall Street Pay Their Fair Share**

The 2017 tax gave huge tax windfalls to corporations and Big Banks. How did these companies use the extra money? By spending more than 150 times as much on buying back their own stock than on increasing wages for workers. Corporations and banks used to pull more of their weight when it comes to taxes, and they must pick up the slack. We can make sure that happens by increasing the tax rate for corporations and closing loopholes that benefit Wall Street investors and high-paid CEOs over average Americans. We can also use the tax code to tackle the problem of excessive executive compensation. At the same time, a small tax on Wall Street trades could create \$777 billion in new revenues over the next decade-- repayment for crashing the economy while having the added benefit of calming markets by tamping down risky high-speed trading. We should also stop companies from "inverting" and re-incorporating in low tax countries and ensure that multinational corporations don't game the tax system. To do that, the public and investors need information about where multinational corporations are paying taxes, if they are. And, we must stop criminals from hiding behind shell companies for tax avoidance or other wrongdoing.

### **3) New Revenues = New Investments**

Public education, health care for seniors and low-income individuals, aid for the less physically and mentally able, providing nutrition assistance to the hungry, rebuilding roads and water pipes, tackling climate change and growing green jobs-- the list of communities' needed investments is endless. As time goes by, these needs are only going to increase. By asking the very wealthy to pay more of their fair share, we will have more money to give a hand up to those who need it most. We can do this by increasing taxes on the rich, for example by strengthening the estate tax, adding a surtax on the incomes of the richest among us, or even by taxing amassed wealth. And, revenues from other new taxes like a Wall Street sales tax also could be reinvested in our communities. Instead of turning our back on hard-hit areas, we need to use tax revenues to create equal opportunity and provide a level playing field for all.

### **4) An IRS for the People**

Right now, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is an over-stigmatized and under-resourced agency, and it is focused in the wrong direction. We need to make paying taxes as easy as possible and audits and other enforcement by the IRS should concentrate more on big-money taxpayers and corporations to maximize the agency's bang for the buck. And, nonprofit organizations need bright line rules on political activity and adequate enforcement in order to protect and encourage democracy.