

Principles for the Tax March in Washington, D.C.

April 15, 2017



Why We March

President Trump is the first president or major-party presidential candidate in four decades to refuse to release his tax returns to the public. We march to demand that the president release his returns, as he has repeatedly promised, but failed, to do. We march because it is in the best interest of the American people to know what financial entanglements and conflicts of interest our leaders have. Because we need to know if the president is personally profiting from the policies he is proposing. And because we want know if he has contributed his fair share of taxes. We march because we will not stand by while the rich and the powerful govern this country guided only by their personal best interests, and not the best interests of the American people as a whole.

Our Shared Demand

President Trump must release his full tax returns. We believe that public servants must be accountable to the people who elect them. The public has a right to understand the financial relationships and potential conflicts of interest of their elected leaders. Therefore, President Trump must immediately release his full tax returns, as all presidents and major-party presidential candidates have done for the last 40 years. Congress should enact legislation requiring this president and future presidential candidates to disclose their tax returns.

Our Commitment to a Just Economy

We believe that America is strongest when everyone has the opportunity to succeed. But for generations, we have placed barriers to success in many communities, especially in communities of color, for women, for people with disabilities, for immigrants, and in the LGBTQIA community. We believe we must all grapple with and repair the economic injustices of the past. We call on our leaders to build an equitable and accessible economy, one in which all members of our communities can participate fully, and enjoy the fruits of our contributions to society.

Our Principles

We Believe in Open Government

Government must function in an accountable and ethical manner for the public to have faith in our elected officials. We need transparency and strong safeguards against corruption to ensure that the president, administration officials, and Congress are free from wrongdoing and conflicts of interest. Officials should not use their offices to benefit monetarily nor engage in hidden entanglements with foreign governments, from debts to investments, which could pose risks to public safety or the public interest.

We Demand an Economy That Works for Everyone

We believe America can work for all, not just for the wealthy few, if we act together to change the rules and put people first. Even as Wall Street and CEOs have done better and better, too many families are living paycheck to paycheck. We need to put fair pay for working people above corporate profits. We believe that workers' rights to organize must be protected and respected, and that we all deserve basic workplace protections such as paid sick days, affordable childcare, safe work conditions, and paid family leave.

We Believe the Tax System is Unfair

The current federal tax system, which allows and even encourages the wealthy and corporations to avoid paying their fair share of taxes, is fundamentally rigged, unjust and broken. We believe that to create an economy that works for all of us with more good jobs and thriving communities, the wealthy and corporations should pay more in taxes than they pay now, not less.

We Believe We Have a Responsibility to Each Other

Tax Day reminds us that a strong and prosperous society requires that everyone contribute. Without taxes there would be no public education and health systems, safe communities, secure retirements, reliable transportation systems, breakthrough research for medical cures, clean renewable energy, and an economic security system to protect and boost struggling families. We call on our leaders, at every level of government, to recognize that we all prosper when these fundamental public investments have the resources they need, and that those with the most, having benefitted the most, should contribute the most.

We Believe in People Over Corporations

Corporations derive enormous benefits from the public investments and protections that our tax dollars support. They have a responsibility and an obligation to contribute as well. When corporations avoid paying their fair share of taxes, either by seeking new loopholes and special breaks or by exploiting existing ones, they force everyone else to pick up the tab. Women, and especially women of color, pay a particularly high price when corporations avoid their responsibilities, as it is women who are most often called upon to fill in the gaps created by underfunded public services. We call for an end to corporate tax loopholes. That includes eliminating the tax incentive for multinational corporations to shift jobs and profits offshore, which would level the playing field for small businesses and domestic corporations.

We Oppose Tax Giveaways to the Rich and Well-Connected

For decades, wealth and income have grown more and more concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. What those with the most need least is another tax cut. We reject efforts to further skew the economy and the tax code away from the vast majority of working people. That includes the recent attempts to end health coverage for millions under the Affordable Care Act so that the richest households and biggest corporations can receive huge tax breaks.

We Believe Tax Justice is Economic Justice

To build a strong and secure future for our communities and for our children, we must invest in them. The primary goal of any effort to reform the tax code should be to ensure the availability of the funds needed to make major new investments and create jobs rebuilding infrastructure, protecting retirement security for today's seniors and future generations, providing quality and accessible education and job training, researching new medical cures and renewable forms of energy, and supporting our nation's children, families, people with disabilities, and seniors in meeting their most fundamental needs, such as housing, healthcare and nutrition. Today, one-third of the people in our communities are poor or near-poor. We must invest to create the jobs and economic security for all or else we will stunt our capacity for growth for decades to come.