

November 29, 2023

Dear Senator:

The undersigned organizations urge you to support the [Billionaires Income Tax](#) proposed by Senate Finance Committee Chairman Ron Wyden. It is a popular, progressive and robust funding source for making vital public investments in working families and communities that will also end the scandal of billionaires paying little or no federal income tax.

The ability of billionaires to dodge taxes under current rules is well documented. According to [reporting by ProPublica](#), Amazon founder Jeff Bezos paid zero federal income taxes in 2007 and 2011, Elon Musk paid zero in 2018, and Michael Bloomberg in “recent years” paid zero several times. When their \$400 billion in wealth gains are included as income, the 25 billionaires in the ProPublica report paid a federal income-tax rate of just 3.4% between 2014 and 2018. That means billionaires can not only pay lower tax *rates* than middle-class workers like teachers, nurses, and firefighters in some years, they can actually pay less in total tax dollars, even during years when their income from their wealth is substantial.

Billionaires can reduce and [even eliminate their tax bills](#) because most of their income comes not from a paycheck but from the growing value of their investments in stocks, businesses, real estate and other assets. They don’t owe tax on that increased wealth unless they sell the underlying assets. But they don’t need to sell to benefit: they can live luxuriously off money borrowed against their rising fortunes at ultra-low interest rates available only to them and go mostly or completely tax free. Musk’s April 2022 purchase of Twitter, for example, was financed in part by a [\\$12.5 billion margin loan](#) against his Tesla stock, allowing him to use those assets like cash, without actually cashing them in and paying taxes on the sale.

The [Billionaires Income Tax](#) (BIT) would end the shocking phenomenon of tax-free billionaires by taxing the annual growth in their wealth. Tax would be due annually on increases in value of easy-to-price assets like corporate stock. Tax on the growth in value of harder-to-price assets like real estate, private businesses and collectibles would only be due on sale, with an added interest charge assessed to compensate for the years of tax-free growth.

The BIT would [raise almost \\$560 billion](#) over 10 years, exclusively from fewer than 1,000 of the nation’s richest households. That’s money that could be used for public investments in healthcare, childcare, education, clean energy, infrastructure, public safety, and more.

More fairly taxing billionaires is very popular with average Americans, both [as a general idea](#) and specifically [as envisaged by the BIT](#). Two-thirds of voters in a 2021 poll supported the Billionaires Income Tax, including half of Republicans.

Because the Billionaires Income Tax would restore fairness to our tax system and raise needed revenue from those best able to pay, we urge your support.

Sincerely,

AFL-CIO  
African American Health Alliance  
Alliance for a Just Society  
Alliance for Retired Americans  
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)  
American Family Voices  
American Federation of Government Employees  
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)  
American Federation of Teachers  
American Sustainable Business Council  
Americans for Democratic Action (ADA)  
Americans for Financial Reform  
Americans for Tax Fairness  
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO  
Bend the Arc  
Blue Haven Initiative  
Blue Future  
Brave New Films  
Campaign for America's Future  
Center for American Progress  
Center for Common Ground  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)  
Center for LGBTQ Economic Advancement & Research (CLEAR)  
Center for Popular Democracy  
The Coalition of Labor Union Women  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Common Defense  
Communications of Workers America (CWA)  
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces  
Demos  
Economic Policy Institute  
Economic Security Project Action  
ExtendPUA.org  
Family Values @ Work Action  
First Focus on Children  
For Our Future  
Franciscan Action Network  
Friends of the Earth U.S.  
The Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Groundwork Action  
Health Care for America Now  
Healthcare Voter

Hedge Clippers  
Housing Works  
ICNA Council for Social Justice  
Indivisible  
Insight Center for Community Economic Development  
Institute for Policy Studies - Program on Inequality  
Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy  
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers  
International Brotherhood of Teamsters  
International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE)  
The International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW)  
Ironpac  
Jean-Michel Cousteau's Ocean Futures Society  
Jobs With Justice  
Justice in Aging  
Legal Aid at Work  
Main Street Alliance  
Missionary Oblates  
MomsRising  
MoveOn  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Association for Hispanic Elderly  
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)  
National Center for Lesbian Rights  
National Education Association  
National Employment Law Project  
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund  
National Organization for Women  
National Urban League  
National Women's Health Network  
National Women's Law Center  
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
Omidyar Network  
Our Revolution  
Oxfam America  
Patriotic Millionaires  
People's Action  
Presente.org  
Pride at Work  
Progressive Change Campaign Committee  
Progressive Democrats of America  
Prosperity Now  
Public Citizen  
Responsible Wealth  
RESULTS  
RootsAction.org  
Service Employees International Union

Small Business Majority  
Social Security Works  
South Asian Network  
Strong Economy for All  
Take on Wall Street  
Tax Justice Network US  
Tax March  
UltraViolet  
Union for Reform Judaism  
Unite Here  
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society  
United Church of Christ Justice and Local Church Ministries  
United for a Fair Economy  
United Steelworkers  
Voices for Progress  
Women's March  
Working Families Party