



## RECOMMENDED MESSAGING ON TAXES AND THE ECONOMY

*These messages are based on a half dozen rigorous polls conducted by [Hart Research Associates](#) on behalf of Americans for Tax Fairness and other clients. It has been updated to include the work done by Topos Partnership: “Taxlandia: Building Public Will for Revenue.”*

### **If corporations and the wealthy pay their fair share of taxes, we can create an economy that works for everyone.**

- We need an economy that works for all of us, not just the wealthy few. If corporations and the wealthy pay their fair share of taxes, we can all share in the promise of America.
- Strong and prosperous communities and families are built on the foundations that are paid for with taxes: good schools, safe neighborhoods, good roads and transit systems, a clean environment, the fight against terrorism and a secure retirement.
- We all benefit if we have enough resources to invest in our schools, healthcare, roads and bridges.

### **Corporations and the wealthy have rigged the tax system to benefit themselves at the expense of the rest of us.**

- Powerful and wealthy special interests have created their own special tax system. We could accomplish a lot more in America if we get rid of their giant loopholes and wasteful tax breaks.
- When big corporations and the rich don't pay what they owe, the rest of us pick up the tab. American families end up paying higher taxes or getting fewer services, and the country goes deeper into debt.
- Our elected officials should work for the common good, and not help the wealthy and the powerful benefit themselves at the expense of the rest of us.

### **We can't get a fair shot when the deck is stacked against working Americans and in favor of the wealthy and big corporations.**

- Our country should provide opportunity for all. No one is guaranteed success in America, but everyone deserves a fair shot to succeed. The promise of America should be for everyone, not just for the rich and powerful.
- Too many politicians have stacked the deck in favor of their wealthy campaign contributors and corporate interests while the rest of us get stuck with tab.
- Many big profitable corporations – such as GE, Pfizer, and Verizon – have gone years without paying any taxes at all. When they don't pay, the rest of us have to fill the gaps.
- Millionaires and billionaires are paying a lower tax rate than middle-class Americans. People who make their living off their Wall Street investments should pay a higher tax rate than those of us who go to work each day on Main Street.

## **Our tax system should not provide tax breaks to corporations that shift jobs and profits offshore.**

- U.S. corporations have \$2.4 trillion in profits stashed offshore, most of them in tax havens. They are dodging up to \$700 billion in U.S. taxes on those profits. Congress should close the loopholes letting corporations do this so they pay what they owe.
- Apple has \$200 billion in profits offshore, on which it owes \$60 billion in U.S. taxes. The billions Apple isn't paying in taxes would make America stronger if it were invested in education, medical research or rebuilding our roads and bridges.
- Congress has to choose between investing in [an economy that works for everyone/substitute your issue] and allowing a handful of large corporations to continue dodging the taxes they owe on their offshore profits.
- If we close tax loopholes allowing corporations to shift jobs and hide profits offshore, we can raise billions of dollars to invest in America. We could make our classrooms less crowded, improve roads and bridges, and find new medical cures.

## **If corporations and the rich pay their fair share, the economy will work better for everyone.**

- To create strong and prosperous communities, we need the rich and big corporations to pay their fair share of taxes.
- If big corporations pay the taxes they owe, we can level the playing field for small businesses that create jobs in America. It's about time big corporations played by the same rules as Main Street businesses.
- We could replace all the lead water pipes in America so there are no more Flint, Michigan's, if Apple pays the \$60 billion in taxes it owes on its offshore profits.
- Making corporations and the rich pay their fair share of taxes [If we clean up the tax code] would allow us to rebuild our roads and bridges and improve our mass transit system. This will create jobs and grow our economy.
- We can reduce class sizes, repair our aging schools and help kids afford to go to college if we [clean up the tax code] close the tax loopholes that let wealthy investors pay lower tax rates than middle-class families pay.
- Instead of cutting funding for teachers and firefighters, we should close the tax loopholes that benefit the rich and big corporations.

## **Other Frames to Use in Talking About Taxes**

- We need to clean up tax breaks so that we get the revenue we need to build thriving communities.
  - Thriving communities depend on things like ...
  - Our kids/our communities/our families need ...
  - Investing in our schools, healthcare, roads and bridges pays off for everyone.
- We could accomplish more if we get rid of tax breaks that the powerful have forced.
  - We lose billions in tax breaks that the powerful have forced on government.
  - Powerful interests should no longer be allowed to create special tax breaks.
  - Those with the most wealth are rigging the tax code to benefit themselves.
  - We need to clean up tax breaks so that everyone, including the wealthiest, pay what they owe.