



MEMORANDUM

FR: Frank Clemente, Executive Director Americans for Tax Fairness
RE: **The Tax Debate: Post-Election Polling Shows the Public Opposes Tax Cuts for Corporations and the Wealthy**
DT: February 7, 2017

Donald Trump and Congressional Republicans are misguided in their efforts to claim a mandate to cut taxes for the wealthy and corporations. A wave of post-election polling shows public opinion is on the side of those who oppose the coming push for Reaganomics 3.

Voters want a government and an economy that works for everyone, but large majorities believe the system is rigged to benefit the rich and powerful. This rigged economy is most evident in the U.S. tax code, which politicians have filled with tax breaks and loopholes that benefit special interests, the wealthy and big corporations.

Americans Want to Change a Rigged Economy

The [Reuters/Ipsos National Election Day Poll](#) found 75% of voters agree that **“America needs a strong leader to take the country back from the rich and powerful,”** and 72% agree **“the American economy is rigged to advantage the rich and powerful.”**

In the [McClatchy-Marist Poll](#) (Dec. 1-9, 2016, p. 8), six times as many people say **“there are different rules for the well-connected and people with money”** (83%) as say **“everyone more or less plays by the same rules to get ahead”** (14%).

Similarly, [the Center for American Progress National Post-Election Survey](#) (Nov. 9-14, 2016, Q33) found that 85% of 2016 voters agree **“the wealthy and big corporations are the ones really running this country.”** Clinton and Trump voters are at 89% and 80%, respectively.

That explains why, in the [NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll](#) (Dec. 12-15, 2016, Q13), 85% of Trump voters say an important reason for their vote was **“to improve the economy and make it work better for the middle and working class,”** with 41% saying that is *the most important* reason they voted for Trump. Conversely, only 36% of Trump voters say the reason they pulled the lever for him was **“to pursue traditional Republican policies,”** with just 10% saying it was the most important reason they voted for him.

Voters Oppose Tax Cuts for Corporations and the Wealthy

Considering that Americans believe the system is rigged in favor of the rich and powerful – and against the middle class – they do not want Washington handing even more tax giveaways to the wealthy and big corporations.

[Quinnipiac University's Post-Election Poll](#) (Nov. 17-20, 2016, Q37) found two-thirds of voters (67%) say President-elect Trump *should not* **"lower taxes on the wealthy,"** while only 29% say he should. And 87% of Democrats and 72% of independents oppose lower taxes on the rich.

A December 2016 poll for the [Center for American Progress Action Fund, Hart Research](#) (p. 8) surveyed 1,206 likely voters in states where Democrats will be defending Senate seats in 2018. They found 57% of voters have an unfavorable reaction to an **"across-the-board cut in federal income tax rates, which would result in very large tax cuts for millionaires and much smaller tax cuts for the middle class,"** compared to only 28% who have a favorable reaction.

A [Washington Post-ABC News poll](#) (Jan. 12-15, 2017, Q19c) found 61% oppose **"reducing income taxes paid by higher-income people,"** while 36% support it. The margin among Democrats is 69% to 31%.

This [same poll \(Q. 19a\)](#) showed that, by a margin of 57% to 35%, Democrats **"oppose reducing income taxes paid by businesses,"** and independents were about evenly split (46% oppose to 48% support).

Similarly, the [Hart poll for the Center for American Progress Action Fund](#) (p. 8) found 55% of likely voters have an unfavorable reaction to **"a large cut in the tax rate for corporations, which would reduce the amount of taxes most large corporations pay."** Only 30% have a favorable reaction.

More broadly, by a nearly two-to-one margin (60% to 32%), [Quinnipiac's post-election survey](#) (Q. 46) found voters oppose **"reducing taxes across the board, even if it means increasing the deficit."** The margin among Democrats is an overwhelming 72% to 20%.

Voters Reject Trickle-Down Economics

A strong majority does not believe tax cuts for the wealthy will improve the economy. [Quinnipiac's post-election poll asked](#) (Q51), **"Do you believe that reducing taxes on the wealthy will improve the economy and create more jobs or not?"** By a margin of 57% to 38% voters believe tax cuts for the wealthy *will not* improve the economy and create more jobs. Among Democrats, opinion is even more lopsided: 79% to 19%.

The [McClatchy-Marist Dec. 2016 poll](#) (p. 11) had even stronger results. It asked, **"In order to help the economy and move the nation forward, do you think the focus of government should be: More on raising the minimum wage and providing job training and education or More on cutting corporate taxes and reducing regulations on businesses?"** Sixty-one percent choose raising the minimum wage, providing job training and education, compared to 35% who choose cutting corporate taxes and reducing business regulations. The results were even more striking for Democrats: 85% to 12%.