

AMERICANS FOR TaxFairness

In 2019, the work of Americans for Tax Fairness was featured more than 500 times in major media outlets. These highlights are from news stories about ATF's work, opinion pieces from editorial boards and columnists influenced by ATF, and op-eds drafted and/or placed by ATF.

NBC NEWS

January 3, 2019

Get Trump's tax returns, progressive group tells House Dems

House Democrats should make it their top priority to obtain Donald Trump's tax returns and release them to the public, a progressive tax group argues in a new report obtained by NBC News. **Americans for Tax Fairness**, a left-leaning organization backed by organized labor, says in a 21-page white paper that securing Trump's tax returns "is an important public policy objective and a legitimate exercise of Congress's oversight authority."

The Washington Post

September 26, 2019

Biden advisers weigh new Wall Street tax as Warren, Sanders pitch aggressive levies on wealthy

"To have a leading presidential candidate, who is considered a moderate, take a position so counter to Wall Street — that would be a big step, no question about it," said Frank Clemente, executive director of **Americans for Tax Fairness**, a liberal group focused on tax equity.

Newsweek

February 4, 2019

Companies Spent 140 Times More on Stock Buybacks than Wage increases in 2018 and Americans Should be 'Outraged' Say Bernie Sanders, Chuck Schumer

Companies largely spent their savings on stock buybacks, benefiting shareholders instead of boosting wages. In 2018, U.S. companies spent a record \$1 trillion buying back their own stock; that's about 140 times more than the \$7.1 billion corporations gave their workers in bonuses or pay increases that year, according to **Americans for Tax Fairness**.

WIRED

Dec. 11, 2019

The Gospel of Wealth According to Marc Benioff

"This is a company that had \$7.8 billion in gross profit in 2018 and didn't pay a dime in federal income tax," Frank Clemente, executive director of **Americans for Tax Fairness**, told me, before running through the assorted mechanisms used by the country's corporations to avoid contributions to the federal treasury: patents held by foreign subsidiaries.

USA TODAY

Dec. 16, 2019

High prescription costs are just one way the Big Pharma drug companies rip us off

Op-ed by Margarida Jorge and Frank Clemente

Despite all those big profits squeezed from consumers, drug corporations don't pay their fair share of income taxes. The 2017 Trump-GOP tax law handed five of the Pharma Big 10 a collective tax cut of over \$8 billion in its first year alone, with more tax breaks coming every year.

FOX BUSINESS

May 21, 2019

Should the rich and big business pay for infrastructure fix?

Americans for Tax Fairness executive director Frank Clemente discusses why big businesses and rich Americans should pay to fix country's infrastructure.

Vox

August 1, 2019

Bill de Blasio's new plan to "tax the hell" out of rich people, explained

The progressive group **Americans for Tax Fairness** applauded de Blasio's proposal and noted that some of the ideas he put forth [reflect a report it put out in April](#). "Mayor de Blasio's progressive tax-reform plan is a recognition not only that the Trump-GOP tax cuts for the wealthy are unfair and aren't working, but also that raising taxes on the wealthy and big corporations is good for the economy."

TIME

Nov. 7, 2019

Democratic Lawmakers To Unveil 'Millionaires Surtax' Bill for Wealthiest American Families

"There's a lot of folks who are putting out there really major tax reforms," Frank Clemente, the executive director of **Americans for Tax Fairness**, tells TIME. "Let's put it this way, members of Congress haven't yet. The public is way ahead of members of Congress on these things. I view the surtax as a more moderate, practical first step for a member of Congress to put their name on."



September 27, 2019

4 Lessons from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act so Far

The liberal advocacy group **Americans for Tax Fairness** tweaks Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin for his claim back in 2017 that the TCJA would “cut down the deficits by a trillion dollars.” Rather than falling, however, deficits are rising rapidly and are expected to top \$1 trillion next year, with the tax cuts playing a significant role in the revenue shortfall. “Mnuchin’s prediction was off by \$1 trillion,” says Frank Clemente, executive director of Americans for Tax Fairness.



June 25, 2019

The Billionaires Club puts 2020 Dems on notice: Impose a wealth tax now!

The letter came as **Americans for Tax Fairness Action Fund** on Monday launched a [website](#) detailing the tax proposals of each Democratic presidential candidate. “It’s surprising that this early in the 2020 race tax policy is emerging as a key issue and a defining one for Democrats,” the group’s executive director, Frank Clemente, said in a statement.



Jan 27, 2019

Warren stakes out 2020 ground with wealth-tax proposal

Frank Clemente, executive director at **Americans for Tax Fairness**, said policymakers now “can have a mature conversation on tax policy and not be hemmed in by falsehoods espoused by conservatives on what’s possible on tax reform.”



October 2, 2019

Here’s How Much More Democratic Candidates Would Pay Under Their Own Tax Plans

“There is pent-up demand for investing in everything from infrastructure, to free public college education, to addressing climate disruption and helping families address health costs and child care costs,” said Frank Clemente, the executive director for the progressive group **Americans for Tax Fairness**. “You cannot do the kinds of things that we need to do in this country unless you’re going to raise the revenue to do that.”



August 23, 2019

The Kochtopus: sprawling network keeps David Koch’s legacy thriving

Take Trump’s 2017 tax cuts, which cost \$1.5tn to the benefit of the rich above all others. The cuts follow a script very similar to the plan put forward by the Koch brothers – which helps explain why they went on to spend more than \$20m promoting the legislation. But then, in the calculation of **Americans for Tax Fairness**, David Koch and Charles would have saved more than \$1bn themselves in income tax.



February 19, 2019

Why 2020 Democratic candidates are pushing more progressive tax proposals

But others argued that drilling down on the details will matter, especially explaining to voters how the tax hikes will be paid for – and what programs the tax revenue would fund. “If [presidential candidates] are going to put out these ambitious spending proposals and investment plans then they have to say how they are going to pay for it,” said Frank Clemente, the executive director of **Americans for Tax Fairness**.



February 12, 2019

Big businesses promised wage hikes from Trump’s tax cuts. What really happened?

Some claim the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was indeed a windfall for employees in 2018. But shareholders have fared far better than employees under the tax law. Companies spent \$929 billion on stock buybacks compared to \$7.1 billion on wage increases and bonuses, according to **Americans for Tax Fairness**.



September 16, 2019

Progressive tax-the-rich push gains momentum

Frank Clemente, executive director of **Americans for Tax Fairness**, said it’s “historic” that the top Democrat on the Finance Committee put out a proposal that is as progressive as Wyden’s and that tackles structural reforms with the tax system. “It’s a game changer,” Clemente said. “This is the direction that progressive tax reform has to go in.”



July 23, 2019

Going Up in Economic Ratings? Then Lose Trickle-Down.

This month, CNBC came out with its annual list of America’s Top States for Business, a ranking on which states don’t move up or down very much from one year to the next. Which is why attention must be paid, as **Americans for Tax Fairness** has pointed out, to one massive exception to this rule. On this year’s list, Kansas placed 19th—which is a full 16 places higher than it placed last year.



May 22, 2019

More Americans believe it’s OK to cheat on your taxes, according to IRS poll

Frank Clemente, executive director of **Americans for Tax Fairness**, a campaign made up of more than 400 organizations advocating progressive tax reform, said the three point shift was noteworthy. The IRS report arrives as many Americans are just getting past a turbulent tax season under a seriously revamped tax code, and as President Donald Trump is embroiled in his own battle with Congressional Democrats who want him to release copies of his tax returns from 2013 to 2018.



August 16, 2019

Trump's tax cut isn't giving the economy the boost it needs

The employee bonuses companies announced with fanfare after the tax cut passed, across the entire labor force, averaged \$28 per worker based on the total payouts tabulated by an organization called **Americans for Tax Fairness**. Wages have risen faster than inflation, but not by much. "Real wages increased by 1.2%" in 2018, the Congressional Research Service reported. "Ordinary workers had very little growth in wage rates."



August 2, 2019

Harris wants to undo Dems' favorite part of GOP tax law

Where Democrats are on taxes now is likely to be different to where they were in 2015, said Frank Clemente, the executive director of **Americans for Tax Fairness**. They're realizing that they may have lost the 2017 tax battle, but are winning the messaging war, he said. That's caused presidential candidates, including Harris and former Vice President Joe Biden, to call for repealing the whole thing.



July 30, 2019

California governor signs bill requiring Trump release his tax returns to appear on ballot

In a statement, progressive group **Americans for Tax Fairness** praised the bill as a win for transparency and accountability. "This bill was necessary because President Donald Trump has departed from over four decades of established political tradition, respected by both Democrats and Republicans alike, by refusing to release his income tax returns," Executive Director Frank Clemente said in a statement. "He has denied voters the opportunity to fully evaluate his fitness for the office."



April 13, 2019

Tax Day 2019 finds a tax system skewed to the rich and powerful

Op-ed by Frank Clemente, Americans for Tax Fairness

Tax Day, when we settle our personal accounts with Uncle Sam, is also a good day to take account of our tax system overall. That's especially true this year, when the first tax returns prepared under the new rules of the Trump-GOP tax law are due. We should be asking whether our system is fair, whether it raises the revenue we need, whether it promotes economic growth and equality. The answer to all three questions is, unfortunately, no. The tax code, already full of loopholes for the wealthy and corporations, was laden with even more by the new tax law.



February 7, 2019

Donald Trump's tax returns would answer 4 serious questions about his fitness and our laws

Op-ed by Frank Clemente and William Rice

Far from a witch hunt or partisan political attack, Democratic congressional efforts to obtain President Donald Trump's tax returns are a necessary exercise of legislative oversight responsibility.



June 16, 2019

Bosses pocket Trump tax windfall as workers see job promises vanish

"The evidence continues to mount that the Trump-GOP tax cuts were a scam, a giant bait-and-switch that promised workers big pay raises, a lot more jobs and new investments, but they largely enriched CEOs and the already wealthy," said Frank Clemente, executive director of **Americans for Tax Fairness**. He noted only 4% of the US workforce saw any sort of pay increase or bonus from the tax cuts. Meanwhile, data collected by ATF shows corporations have cut thousands of jobs since the tax cuts were passed, while using tax windfalls to buy back \$1tn of their own stock, which primarily benefits corporate executives and wealthy investors since half of all Americans own no stock.



May 29, 2019

Your paltry savings from the Trump tax cuts

Wages have picked up in 2019, but there's still little evidence companies are passing tax savings along to their employees. About 1,900 companies announced one-time bonuses related to the tax cuts last year, according to **Americans for Tax Fairness**. In total, they committed about \$4.4 billion to bonuses for about 5.4 million workers, or about \$815 per worker. That's real money, but not enough to change the picture nationally, bonuses were only \$28.



May 8, 2019

Donald Trump says Gaming Tax System was 'Sport' While he Admonishes Poor Americans for Using Welfare

The president's \$1.5 trillion tax plan gave the top 1 percent of Americans about 21 percent of the tax cuts. By 2027, over 80 percent of tax cuts will flow to the top 1 percent. The tax plan also cut corporate rates from 35 percent to 21 percent. In the plan's first year, the number of U.S. companies paying no taxes at all doubled. Yet corporations received 11 times as much in tax cuts as they gave to their employees in one-time bonuses and wage hikes, according to **Americans for Tax Fairness**.

SELECTED STATE CLIPS



January 2, 2019

Wealthy celebrate tax law anniversary while workers pick up the tab

Op-ed by Frank Clemente, Americans for Tax Fairness

The so-called Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) was signed into law by President Donald Trump last Dec. 22. The plan was misleadingly sold as a boon to the middle class despite ample evidence that it really catered to the well-off and well-connected. After 12 months, it's clear the warnings were right: The real winners are big corporations and the rich.



May 10, 2019

Hightower: Fatcats know where the money is

According to **Americans for Tax Fairness**, hundreds of TCJA's corporate backers are already making a killing. In just the first three quarters of 2018, big business quietly pocketed stunning tax savings they would have -- and should have -- paid to support America's public needs: Apple, \$4.5 billion; AT&T, \$2.2 billion; Bank of America, \$2.4 billion; Verizon, \$1.75 billion; Walmart, \$1.6 billion.



January 1, 2019

(Southern Illinois)

Commentary: Workers left picking up tax tab

Op-ed by Frank Clemente, Americans for Tax Fairness

It's the Trump-GOP tax law's first anniversary and the wealthy are celebrating like it was Christmas all year, which it basically was for them. Working families, on the other hand, are less festive this holiday season: they weren't invited to the party but are expected to pay for it.



(Washington State) April 11, 2019

How Democrats stopped worrying and learned to love taxing the rich

Left-leaning groups were outgunned by anti-tax activists like Grover Norquist, who demanded that Republicans and moderate Democrats sign pledges never to raise taxes. "It put the fear of God in them," says Dennis Bailey, spokesman for **Americans for Tax Fairness**. "There was a lot of pressure on Congress to capitulate."



(Louisiana) July 28, 2019

If Kansas can do it, Louisiana can, too

CNBC recently named Kansas No. 19 on its list of America's Top States for Business, according to **Americans for Tax Fairness**. The rating came as a surprise because Kansas, like Louisiana, seven years ago cut taxes for the wealthy and suffered nine rounds of budget cuts, three credit downgrades and missed state payments.



April 25, 2019

State of Maine: Walmart's blueprint for success: Big stores, low taxes

The Walmart website asserts the business's "efforts to constantly improve what we do and how we do it." Boy howdy! The world's biggest retailer is seeking to improve its bottom line at our expense. **Americans for Tax Fairness** says the company receives an estimated "\$7.8 billion per year in federal subsidies and tax breaks," including \$70 million annually in "economic development subsidies" from state and local governments.



August 17, 2019

Guest opinion: Bold policy needed to rein in Big Pharma prices

Not only do these companies reap the benefits of publicly funded research and favorable patent laws, they also were big beneficiaries of Trump's tax cuts. **Americans for Tax Fairness** reports that Big Pharma got \$6 billion in tax breaks in 2018 on domestic profits and an astounding \$70 billion on offshore profits.



October 18, 2019

2017 tax cut promises were pie in the sky

A very small share of the corporate tax cuts appears to have been spent on increasing wages or paying worker bonuses. The CRS report says, "one organization (**Americans for Tax Fairness**) that tracks these bonuses has reported a total of \$4.4 billion. With U.S. employment of 157 million, this amount is \$28 per worker."



January 19, 2019

Commentary: The GOP tax cut is just as bad as we feared it would be

Op-ed by Frank Clemente, Americans for Tax Fairness

A little more than a year after President Donald Trump and his fellow Republicans enacted their tax cut costing \$1.9 trillion, all of the bad outcomes critics predicted from the law are coming true: Benefits are flowing disproportionately to the wealthy and big corporations while working families are paying the price.



January 22, 2019

Pennsylvania lawmakers should calculate the high cost of low wages | Editorial

That echoes a larger and more shocking calculation that made news a few years ago, when the group **Americans for Tax Fairness** claimed that Walmart's low wages cost taxpayers \$6.2 billion in social service costs, such food stamps, housing support, and health care that its low paid workers needed to survive.