

BEFORE THE BIG DEBATE, SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT: ON TRUMP'S TAXES, ECONOMY, COVID & SUPREME COURT

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*Trump's Tax Dodging Reveals System Rigged for Rich; 2017 Tax Law an Economic Bust;
GOP Virus Aid Targets Wealthy Over Workers; SCOTUS Pick Threatens Healthcare*

TRUMP'S TAXES

A [New York Times's investigation](#) of President Trump's federal income tax payments from 2000 to 2017 and the state of his business empire reveal how rigged the tax system is in favor of the wealthy, the fragility of Trump's finances and the threat that poses to U.S. national security.

- **Unfairness of the tax system:**
 - Trump, a billionaire [worth \\$3.5 billion in 2017](#) per Forbes, **paid no federal income taxes for 11 out of 18 years between 2000 and 2017 and paid just \$750 in 2016 and in 2017.**
 - By comparison, in 2017 a [typical nurse or schoolteacher paid on average \\$5,400](#) in federal income taxes; a firefighter paid about \$3,400; a bus driver, \$2,400; and a childcare worker, \$1,150.
 - **While billionaire Trump was dodging millions in taxes, "regular Joe" Biden was paying his fair share of taxes every year.** Over that 18-year span, [Biden paid a total of \\$5 million on \\$16.4 million of income](#)—a cumulative tax rate of 30%.
- Donald Trump is vigorously exploiting a tax system he helped rig.
 - **Donald Trump is the poster child for what is wrong with our tax system. He is a tax cheat and an expert at exploiting tax loopholes.**
 - Trump [exploits numerous loopholes](#) that real estate lobbyists—including [Trump himself](#)—have crammed into the tax code. Trump made sure his 2017 tax law preserved all those goodies, plus [adding a few more](#). Trump's [\\$2 trillion tax cut](#) mostly benefited the rich and major corporations, especially the real estate industry.
 - [Joe Biden's tax plan](#) will make our tax system much fairer by increasing taxes on the rich and corporations, raising substantial revenue needed to improve public services and making new investments to build an economy that works better for everyone. Biden's plan will not directly tax any household making less than \$400,000 a year.
 - **Trump's tax returns show he may be breaking the law.** He wrote off as business expenses personal costs like the legal defense of his son in the Russia inquiry and his costly hair care. He paid himself and apparently his daughter Ivanka hundreds of thousands of dollars as "consultants," even though they both already worked for the Trump Organization, thus artificially upping costs to lower tax bills.
- Trump's precarious financial situation poses a threat to U.S. national security.
 - **Donald Trump's businesses are failing, and his huge debts are a major national security threat.** As the [Times reports](#), Trump "is personally responsible for loans and other debts totaling \$421 million, with most of it coming due within four years." It is not clear to whom this money is owed or what leverage they have over Trump.
 - Experts say that level of debt [might block security clearances](#) for most federal employees.

TRUMP & BIDEN RECORDS & PLANS ON THE ECONOMY & TAXES

- **Even before COVID-19, Trump's 2017 GOP tax law had [failed to fulfill](#) its promises:**
 - **On Fairness:** It was **not a middle-class tax cut**. This year the top 1% will get as much in tax cuts—\$78 billion—as the bottom 80%. Nearly 100 big profitable corporations paid zero federal income taxes in the law's first year.
 - **On Jobs & Wages:** It did **not improve wage gains** for workers: average pay hikes in the first two years under the law lagged those under the last two years under Obama-Biden. **Job growth did not accelerate** either—it was nearly identical over those two periods.
 - **On the Deficit & Economy:** The tax cuts **will not pay for themselves**, but instead add \$1.9 trillion to the national debt; the deficit soared in the first two years of the law. The law **did not boost the economy**: in those first two years, economic growth was very similar to the Obama-Biden years. **Business investment did not boom**.
- **Biden will raise taxes only on the wealthy and corporations to invest in working families.**
 - He will not directly raise taxes on **anyone making less than \$400,000**, as confirmed by [PolitiFact](#), [FactCheck.org](#) and the Washington Post's [Fact Checker](#).
 - He will use the \$4 trillion of revenue raised to **strengthen Social Security**; improve healthcare, education, childcare and housing; and build a sustainable economy.
- **Moody's Analytics recently declared the [Biden plan would be better for the economy](#)—and add 7.4 million more jobs—than Trump's tax-cuts-for-the-rich, trickle-down policies.**

ECONOMIC RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

- Six months after the CARES Act, Trump and his Republican allies in the Senate have still **[failed to provide a serious follow-up](#)** coronavirus aid bill, despite millions falling ill and losing health insurance, tens of millions jobless and hungry.
- In those same six months, America's roughly **[650 billionaires collectively got \\$845 billion richer](#)**, a nearly 30% leap in wealth amid national misery and despair.
- The **[CARES Act contained a "Millionaire's Giveaway"](#)** that will this year give 43,000 wealthy business owners tax cuts averaging \$1.6 million. Repeal of the giveaway, which House Democrats and Biden support, would raise nearly \$250 billion for COVID relief.

HEALTHCARE IMPACT OF SUPREME COURT PICK

- Since Trump wants the Supreme Court to **[eliminate the Affordable Care Act \(ACA\)](#)**, his choice for the recently vacated seat, Amy Coney Barrett, **[will likely support that effort to deprive 21 million of health insurance](#)** and threaten the coverage of over 130 million with pre-existing conditions.
- **Biden wants to [spend \\$750 billion](#) to preserve and improve the ACA**. Given the same chance as Trump, Biden would appoint a justice who would uphold the ACA.