

Talking points

Andy Barr has supported a far more regressive federal tax structure than what currently exists today. He wants to flatten the tax rate across the income spectra¹⁻², eliminate the Alternative Minimum Tax^{1,3} and the Estate Tax (primarily affect the wealthiest taxpayers)³⁻⁵, eliminate the capital gains and dividend taxes (major source of income among the top 0.1% of Americans with largest incomes)⁵ and broaden the tax base (which means collecting more taxes from the poorest Americans)⁶. He opposes raising tax revenue as a means of solving the deficit problem and prefers to cut government spending⁷⁻⁸. He supports lower corporate and business tax rates and wants to eliminate any tax on corporations bringing foreign revenue back to the US⁸⁻⁹. In short, Barr would shift the tax burden from the wealthiest to the poorest tax payers and cut social programs and support to reduce the revenue shortfall.

Questions

1. Congressman Barr has voted to end the Estate Tax and continues to describe this tax as unfair to small business owners. The Estate Tax currently only affects the top 0.2% of Estates (the other 99.8% are untaxed)⁶, it primarily affects untaxed capital gains in those estates and addresses the serious problem of “wealth stagnation” (concentration of wealth in the hands of a small group of people by passing accumulated wealth from generation to generation). **Why should accumulated untaxed capital gains not be taxed? How do you plan to replace the lost revenue from the Estate Tax estimated to be in the hundreds of billions over the next decade?**
2. Congressman Barr has argued for both the elimination of and no increase in the capital gains and dividend taxes which are the principle sources of income of Americans with the top 0.1% of annual incomes. This would further reduce or avoid increasing federal taxes on the wealthiest Americans reaping the largest rewards in our society. **Why should your constituents support a plan that would significantly reduce or prevent increasing federal revenue from the wealthiest Americans who receive far and away the greatest financial rewards by living in this country?**
3. You have promoted the idea of reducing taxes to increase economic growth. However, the vast majority of the increased rewards from economic growth are passed to the richest 10% of Americans who own most of the wealth of this country. **Please explain to your constituents why they should support an economic policy that rewards the richest and does little to nothing to help those at the middle and bottom of the economic ladder in this country?**
4. The federal deficit is rapidly approaching \$20 trillion, and the problem resides with a chronic difference over the last 35 years between federal revenue (average 18.3% of GDP) and federal costs (average of 21-22% of GDP). The U.S. Congress has increased revenues numerous times in our history to cover increased government spending, while GDP has never grown continuously at 5.5% or more/yr for each 1% cut in federal revenue. **Why should your constituents have any faith in your views that less tax revenue and cuts in government social supports are a rational or practical solution to our deficit problem?**
5. Congressman Barr has embraced a flat and broader tax structure for federal revenue, even though this would place a greater tax burden on working Americans already struggling to make ends meet (raising costs from healthcare, housing, college tuition, childcare and living expenses). **Explain how your flat tax across your constituent base which reduces tax responsibilities on the most wealthy and cuts government services and social support to reduce costs, will help and not hurt the majority of your constituents?**

SEPTEMBER 10, 2017 VISIT TO ANDY BARR'S OFFICE

REFERENCES:

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