



## A FairTax® whitepaper

### Why the FairTax is good for young and low-income families

There are several reasons why the FairTax (HR 25/S 122), a proposal to replace the current income tax system with a highly progressive, revenue-neutral, federal retail sales tax, will benefit low-income, often young families. And those on fixed incomes for many of the same reasons.

The FairTax is the only plan that completely “untaxes” the poor and also dramatically lowers tax rates on young, low-income families living above the poverty level. The FairTax achieves this result by:

- (1) Eliminating all federal payroll withholding taxes, allowing wage earners to take home their entire paychecks – it's the full paycheck plan. Social Security taxes, the most regressive tax of all, are no longer withheld from paychecks.
- (2) The FairTax also ends the income tax system, so paycheck-to-paycheck families have no income tax withheld. Neither do they have to keep records, file returns to get their refunds, hire preparers for complex earned income tax credit (EITC) forms, or defend themselves against EITC-targeted IRS audits.
- (3) The FairTax allows every family to purchase what they deem as basic living essentials tax free via a system that rebates taxes on all spending up to the poverty level, based on the Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines.<sup>1</sup>
- (4) The FairTax ends the sham of corporate taxes – government can levy taxes on business, which will collect and remit them, but never pay them. Business “pays” such taxes by raising prices to consumers, lowering the wages paid to workers, and by lowering dividends paid to shareholders. The FairTax removes these hidden taxes.
- (5) Used products are not taxed, allowing these consumers yet another means to reduce their tax burden on spending above the poverty level.

The FairTax is a revenue-neutral proposal, raising no more or less tax than the current system. In addition, used products, used cars, homes, etc., are not taxed under this legislation. Only the FairTax honestly and transparently achieves the goal of completely untaxing America's low-income strata up to the poverty level.

#### **The FairTax is a discretionary tax.**

The FairTax provides individuals with the maximum choice over what to do with their income: They can consume it (and pay taxes) or save it (and pay no taxes). If one chooses to consume for personal benefit beyond the necessities of life, one pays a tax. If one does not, but chooses instead to save and invest for education, a home or a better retirement, one defers consumption and the tax. Unlike current law, the FairTax is not biased towards consumption. It encourages

---

<sup>1</sup> See whitepaper, The Prebate Explained, February 2013. <http://www.fairtax.org/PDF/PrebateExplained.pdf>



young families to save and invest. If we had enacted a FairTax ten years ago, according to a study by Beacon Hill Institute<sup>2</sup>, we would each be ten percent better off today.

### **Save faster under the FairTax.**

The FairTax puts the amount and timing of paying tax under the taxpayer's control, it enables young families and homebuyers to save for their purchase faster. Why are individuals able to save faster under the FairTax? First, the FairTax removes the enormous disadvantage to savings and investment under our income tax system. Wage and salary income is included in the income tax base when it is earned originally. If that income is consumed, the benefits of consumption go untaxed. However, if what is left of the wages and salaries is saved (for example, to buy a home), the earnings are taxed as the income from that investment is generated. Then, if the income-producing asset, such as a stock or bond, equipment or real property interest is sold for more than it was purchased, the benefit of the capital investment – the capital gain – is taxed a third time. If these investments are inherited, they are taxed yet again. A principal advantage the FairTax has over an income tax, therefore, is that a down payment can be saved without fighting against the cascading taxes on savings. Furthermore, since you keep 100% of your paycheck, you only have to earn \$100 to save \$100. Under today's income/payroll tax system, most people have to earn at least \$121 to have \$100 to save.

### **Education tuition is not taxed.**

An equally important feature of the FairTax and its impact on young families is its treatment of education. The FairTax exempts education tuition at the primary, secondary and college level, recognizing that education is an investment in our nation's intellectual capital and is every bit as important as our investment in physical capital. Education is often a large expense for young families.

### **The FairTax creates jobs, rather than *destroying* them as our income tax system does.**

The FairTax additionally benefits lower-income families through increased economic growth. Slow economic growth or recessions have a disproportionately adverse impact on the poor and low-income families. Breadwinners in these families are more likely to lose their jobs, are less likely to have the resources to weather bad economic times, and are more in need of the initial employment opportunities that a dynamic, growing economy provides. The FairTax dramatically improves economic growth and improves wage rates, while retaining the present tax system needlessly delays economic progress. In addition, the FairTax eliminates about 90% of the \$430 billion dollars in compliance costs, an annual savings of nearly \$3400 for every family in America. These are funds that could be spent on a better education for our children, for a home, or for a better retirement.

### **Ending the sham of corporate taxes**

Corporations do not pay taxes – people do. This is not a contest between capitalism and socialism, or good and bad, or Wall Street and Main Street. It just is. The buck does not stop at a corporation, it just passes through. This is the nature of the beast. When a corporation is taxed, any one or all three of the following pass-throughs happen in some measure:

---

<sup>2</sup> David G. Tuerck, et.al., "The Economic Effects of the FairTax: Results from the Beacon Hill Institute CGE Model," The Beacon Hill Institute at Suffolk University, February 2007.



## Why the FairTax is good for young and low-income families

- The corporation will raise the price of its goods or services by the amount of the tax and the cost of compliance, if competition allows. These hidden premiums are hidden in the cost of every good or service bought in or exported by our country. Even those corporations that legally (if artfully) zero their taxes still have compliance costs to pass through. Most importantly, whom do these hidden premiums really hurt? Who can least afford the increased cost? Why – it's the low-income/fixed-income citizens we set out to protect when we taxed corporations in the first place!
- Often global competition (and WalMart) will not allow pricing to absorb the entire cost of taxes/compliance. What is the next corporate move? Reduce the cost of labor. Who loses their jobs to efficiency or foreign manufacturing? It is our low-income friends again, taking it on the chin and out of their wallets.
- Now, assume prices are as high as they can be and labor costs are as low as they can be, and there are still taxes/compliance costs to pay. What do corporations do? Lower profits to their shareholders. Many economists agree this is the most likely effect of corporate taxation.

For a mom-and-pop business, that means a lesser lifestyle for Mom and Pop. That means later or no retirement. For Wall Street, that means union pension funds experience lackluster performance when invested in domestic corporations. This may not be a big concern for the low-income, working poor, but that certainly puts a double whammy on the working class. Fewer jobs and threatened pensions. And then there are the undue burdens placed on our fixed-income retirees. Yet again, the very groups we set out to protect with corporate income taxation are those we punish most.

In summary, the FairTax is the only complete tax reform plan that honestly, transparently, and comprehensively untaxes (up to the poverty level) those struggling to climb the American ladder of success. See also our white paper for fixed-income and other retirees.

### **What is the FairTax Plan?**

The FairTax Plan is a comprehensive proposal that replaces all federal income and payroll based taxes with an integrated approach including a progressive national retail sales tax, a prebate to ensure no American pays federal taxes on spending up to the poverty level, dollar-for-dollar federal revenue replacement, and, through companion legislation, the repeal of the 16<sup>th</sup> Amendment. This nonpartisan legislation (HR 25 / S 122) abolishes all federal personal and corporate income taxes, gift, estate, capital gains, alternative minimum, Social Security, Medicare, and self-employment taxes and replaces them with one simple, visible, federal retail sales tax – administered primarily by existing state sales tax authorities. The IRS is disbanded and defunded. The FairTax taxes us only on what we choose to spend on new goods or services, not on what we earn. The FairTax is a fair, efficient, transparent, and intelligent solution to the frustration and inequity of our current tax system.

### **What is Americans for Fair Taxation® (FairTax.org)?**

FairTax.org is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization solely dedicated to replacing the current tax system. The organization has hundreds of thousands of members and volunteers nationwide. Its plan supports sound economic research, education of citizens and community leaders, and grassroots mobilization efforts. For more information visit the Web page: [www.FairTax.org](http://www.FairTax.org) or call 1-800-FAIRTAX.

Updated by Karen Walby, Ph.D., Chief Economist, Americans For Fair Taxation, 2007. February, 2013.