Connecting The New Tax Law With Cuts In Critical Programs
HCAN & HCANEF Tax Activities, April 2018

On Monday, April 16 and Tuesday, April 17, HCAN and HCANEF partners across the states came together to remind Americans around the country who really pays for tax breaks for Wall Street CEOs and the richest households in the new Republican law: our families and communities. HCAN and HCANEF partners held 24 events in 16 states over the course of two days, coordinating our activities with the Tax Day March and with Americans for Tax Fairness (ATF).

As part of each event, partners released a tax report co-authored by ATF and HCAN that highlights how the new tax law disproportionately benefits prescription and health insurance companies while forcing bit cuts to healthcare, SNAP, housing, education and other social safety net services.

Together HCAN and HCANEF partners demanded that Congress repeal the GOP tax and instead invest in improving and expanding health care, education and other essential services for working families. Highlights from the Tax Day Activities are below.

ARKANSAS

On April 17th, Arkansas Community Organizations (ACO) members held an event in front of the Chamber of Commerce building in Little Rock. They tied the federal tax breaks to millionaires to the Governor’s proposal to cut the tax rate for the top income earners in the state. The even received coverage on KUAR radio but link is not available.
**FLORIDA**

Organize Florida held a press conference in Tampa on April 17 that included speakers Bruce Nissen (Retired University Labor Studies Professor and past Director of the Research Institute on Social and Economic Policy at Florida International University), Dr. Mona Mangat (Practicing Pediatric Allergy Specialist and member of Doctors for America) and Ace Padian (Project Manager, Network to End Hunger).

Organize Florida’s event highlighted effects of the new tax law on Medicaid and SNAP cuts on low income Floridians. See press coverage below.

*Tax deadline looms as Americans scramble to file, 4/17/18*

*Federal Tax Cuts and State Budget Will Harm Floridians, 4/18/18*

**ILLINOIS**

Citizen Action IL turned out over 30 people to their tax day event at in front of the IRS building in Downers Grove on April 11. Their action focused on accountability on Rep. Roskam, one of the main architects of the tax bill in the House.

**INDIANA**
Faith in Indiana held a tax day press call on April 16 that featured Fran Quigley, People of Faith for Access to Medicines, tying the repeal of the ACA individual mandate in the tax law to increases in premiums and coverage losses in IN.

**Without Individual Mandate, Report Predicts Many Hoosiers Will Opt Out of Insurance, 4/18/18**  

Later that week, Faith in Indiana held a large summit attended by Senator Donnelly in which the Senator committed to continue fighting to protect health care by rejecting efforts to repeal, replace or give away tax breaks to the rich paid for by cuts to health care and the social safety net. [https://www.facebook.com/FaithinIndiana/](https://www.facebook.com/FaithinIndiana/)

**MAINE**

Maine People’s Alliance released the ATF-HCAN report as protesters gathered outside the post office in Portland to remind taxpayers that corporations got a big new tax break this tax day. The promoted their blog and the action on Facebook.

Good piece is the Maine Beacon here linking to the new report:
As Mainers File Their Taxes, A Reminder that Corporations Got a Huge New Tax Break

MISSOURI
MO JWJ worked with allies to place an op-ed in the St. Louis American in a faith leader voice leading up to Tax Day:

Clergy Challenge Congress to Heed Jesus

NEVADA
Battle Born Progress held a press conference in front of Senator Heller’s office in Las Vegas on April 17. After the event, they delivered 170+ petition signatures calling for Heller to repeal the Trump Tax & oppose cuts to Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, SNAP, & Disability Insurance.

Their press conference featured key allies including SEIU home care workers and also included a mock W2 form for Dean Heller, listing corporate campaign donations and the size of his tax break. Univision covered the event—no clip recovered yet (see screenshot pic).

Battle Born also published a blog post using Nevada’s data from the HCAN and AFT report on Nevada Forward.

In addition, Battle Born created this video on Facebook Live highlighting Senator Dean Heller and the Tax Scam and were active on twitter throughout the day:
https://www.facebook.com/BattleBornProgress/videos/1681213861946996/

Top Twitter posts:
https://twitter.com/BattleBornProg/status/98633691235336192
https://twitter.com/BattleBornProg/status/986331719115538433
https://twitter.com/BattleBornProg/status/986307727700910081
https://twitter.com/BattleBornProg/status/986306373150392320
NEW HAMPSHIRE
Granite State Education Fund (GSEF) organized a response to a visit from Ivanka Trump and Steven Mnuchin’s visit to the state to tout the new tax law in Derry, NH, on tax day.

Union Leader, Ivanka Trump, Steve Mnuchin tell Granite Staters that Tax Day will be less painful in 2019, 4.17.18

Eagle Tribune, Talking Taxes, 4.17.18

Eagle Tribune, Ivanka Trump and treasury secretary tout tax plan, 4.18.18

Manchester Ink Link, Progressives respond to federal tax reform session in Derry, 4.19.18

GSEF also released the ATF report and promoted the message on social media on April 16th, leading up to the Derry event.

https://www.facebook.com/events/501810943550281/

NEW JERSEY
New Jersey Citizen Action (NJCA) organized a tax day accountability action outside Rep. MacArthur’s district in Toms River. He was the only NJ Rep. to vote against the tax bill. Their action featured small business owners in the district and constituents directly impacted by the forced cuts to Medicaid and Medicare.

Their Facebook Live video from the event garnered over 650 views.

NEW YORK
Citizen Action of New York (CANY) mobilized their coalition network and organized 6 tax day events in 4 Congressional Districts of Representatives Faso, Tenney, Stefanik and Katko as well as two events in NYC between April 16 and April 17.

See clips below from events in Tenney and Katko’s districts.
Members of Indivisible Binghamton Rally Outside Congresswoman Tenney’s Office, 4/17/18

Local Activists, Elected Officials Protest Rep John Katko’s Support of Tax Bill, 4/17/18
Video of Tax Day Actions Here:
https://www.facebook.com/CapitalDistrictCitizenActionNY/videos/1041338519349411/
https://www.facebook.com/CapitalDistrictCitizenActionNY/videos/104134952682101/
https://www.facebook.com/eaimone/videos/10204178970752412/

NORTH CAROLINA
Action NC organized a tax day event outside the Charlotte post office on April 17. The event featured senior women and their personal stories about Trump’s proposed cuts to Medicaid and the social safety net following passage of the tax bill.

[Image of senior women at the tax day event]

Action NC also published this blog post that highlights the ATF/HCAN tax report.

New report: GOP’s December tax giveaway is turning out to be just the disaster critics predicted, 4/17/18

PENNSYLVANIA
Pennsylvania Health Access Network (PHAN) held a community forum about the tax bill’s impact on Medicaid. The event featured 2 school board members to highlight the impact of Medicaid cuts on public schools and kids.

Medicaid Advocates Worry About Future of Program, 4/17/18

Bucks County Residents Called On to Help Save Medicaid, 4/18/18

PHAN also held a press conference call to release the ATF/HCAN Tax Report. See coverage below from Pennsylvania Legislative News Service.

Pennsylvania Health Access Network Voices Concerns on New Tax Law
By Mike Howells, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | April 17, 2018

The Pennsylvania Health Access Network (PHAN) today released a report produced by Americans for Tax Fairness and Health Care for America Now assessing the impact of the newly passed federal tax law on Pennsylvania residents.

Patrick Keenan, director of Policy and Consumer Protections for PHAN, said the wealthiest this year are going to be collecting even more as a result of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, and state residents should be questioning how corporate tax cuts are going to be paid for.

Keenan contended the balance in fact will fall “squarely on the shoulders of working-class Pennsylvanians, and the safety net that they rely on.”

“We have to answer how we are going to address the new debt that they are going to create,” he said of the tax cuts.

Keenan said the new report shows that not only is the new tax law unfairly generous to big businesses and Wall Street, but also shifts more burdens onto individual Pennsylvanians. The richest one percent of state residents will receive 27 percent of the state’s total tax cut, Keenan said, while those in the bottom 60 percent will get just 12 percent, averaging about $400.

He added the repeal of certain provisions of the Affordable Care Act included in the tax law will increase the number of uninsured Pennsylvanians by 105,000 and drive up premiums for continuing enrollees.

Marc Stier, director of the Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center, emphasized that the tax cuts are “extraordinarily skewed” toward the top one percent of earners.

“These tax cuts were sold as a way of spurring economic growth,” Stier said, but contended that is not happening in reality. He said that investments are not going up and corporate plans remain largely unchanged from a year ago.

“Very few corporations have called for higher wages,” Stier said, and among those employees who have seen a benefit, many are getting one-time lump sum bonuses rather than raises. He indicated the bulk of investment has been in the form of stock buybacks and dividends.

“If we really want to generate economic growth, we’ve got to increase economic demand,” he said, adding any tax cuts should be focused on the middle class.

Ann Saunders, public policy advocate for hunger nonprofit Just Harvest, discussed the implications for the Farm Bill in its proposed renewal issued last week. She said there are proposed cuts to benefits as well as to eligibility that would target low-income workers.

Additionally, Saunders said work requirements and sanctions would also effectively cut benefits to a wide range of individuals.
“This is sort of a way to pay for these tax cuts,” Saunders said of the cuts proposed in the Farm Bill. She added work requirements at the state level are also being considered. Pastor Tim Johansen from Temple Lutheran Church in Havertown discussed the opioid crisis and the lack of resources to combat addiction.

“It makes no sense to make cuts to Medicaid” in the context of the crisis, he said. “It really makes me wonder what it is that we worship.”

James Luby, a Medicaid consumer from Scranton, discussed how the program has helped him deal with an adult diagnosis of Asperger’s.

“I’m the everyday, real face of this condition,” he said, adding that thanks to Medicaid he has access to a therapist, medication, and preventive care.

Luby said that provides not only a safety net, but a solid foundation for being a productive citizen.

“What’s going on is a direct attack on me,” Luby said. He said work requirements have already caused him to lose his SNAP benefits, because his job does not comply with what he called “a very narrow standard.” Luby criticized work requirement bills moving through the House for their lack of funds for things like job training and daycare.

“I’m the human consequence,” he said of the tax bill. The new report is available here.

HCAN partner POWER, a congregation-based group in Philadelphia, also held an event on tax day in a local church to educate its members about the impact of the new tax law, who benefits from the law and how healthcare and public services are at risk because of it.

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Join us tomorrow for Tax Day at 3:30 PM to tell our representatives that we will not stand for cuts to healthcare caused by the Tax Bill that gave tax giveaways to corporations and the very rich.

The Tax Bill is Taxing our Healthcare

Join us on Tax Day to tell our representatives that we will not stand for cuts to healthcare caused by the Tax Bill that gave tax giveaways to corporations and the very rich. Hear from experts in the field and clergy, and publicly demonstrate that we stand for health programs like Medicare, Medicaid, and the Affordable Care Act.

Sunday, April 15, 2018 at 3:30 PM
St. Luke United Methodist Church
568 Montgomery Avenue, Bryn Mawr, PA 19041

For more information e-mail Lilah Saber at LSaber@powerinterfaith.org.

powerinterfaith.org  powerinterfaith
West Virginia Citizen Action Group partnered with Wood County Indivisible for their tax day event outside Rep. McKinley’s district office in Parkersburg. They organized a creative action with members dressed as billionaires to demonstrate the winners of the tax bill and emphasized who really pays: working families.

Group Holds Tax Day Protest, 4/17/18
http://www.thenewscenter.tv/content/news/Group-holds-tax-day-protest-480042933.html

HCAN/HCANEF OP EDs

In addition to the on-the-ground activities highlighted above, HCAN and HCANEF partners also generated these great op-eds in April highlighting the Republican tax giveaway and cuts to critical services that working families depend on.

Florida:
Faith in Public Life produced this op-ed from Elder Lee Harris in the Florida Times Union

Tax Bill cruelly favors the rich over working Americans
http://www.jacksonville.com/opinion/20180417/tuesday-lead-letter-tax-bill-cruelly-favors-rich-over-working-americans

Illinois:
With help from Citizen Action of IL, HCAN produced this fantastic op-ed in the Chicago Sun-Times on April 15th. The op ed is from a firefighter who loses out under the new tax bill:

I’m a Chicago Firefighter Who’s Paying A Lot More Under the GOP Tax Plan

Ohio:
Faith in Public Life also generated this opinion piece from local clergy leader Joseph Cherry contrasting corporate greed and big giveaways in the tax law with the needs of the community.

This Tax Day, corporate greed is beating out community needs
http://www.cleveland.com/opinion/index.ssf/2018/04/this_tax_day_corporate_greed_i.html#incart_river_index;
Also in Ohio, HCANEF worked with Marcia Dinkins of Ohio Organizing Collaborative on this op-ed from a faith leader that ran widely on religion news service that connects tax breaks in the new law to the timely proposed cuts to SNAP.

*The lesson of the loaves and fishes is lost on the house agriculture committee*