

Corporate America Dominates Tax Lobbying

Six thousand tax lobbyists descended on Capitol Hill in 2024. Out of the top 100 entities hiring the most tax lobbyists, all but two represented corporate interests.

Introduction and Key Findings

In late February 2025, House Republicans passed a budget resolution that called for \$4.5 trillion in tax cuts. Senate Republicans recently passed a similar resolution laying the foundation for more than \$5 trillion in tax cuts.¹ While these resolutions included few details and are meant to serve as a blueprint for a more detailed bill to follow, Republicans have acknowledged that they plan to at least extend the tax cuts passed by the first Trump administration in 2017,² tax cuts that overwhelmingly benefitted the wealthy and profitable corporations.³

Republicans have proposed paying in part for the extension of the Trump tax cuts – and any other tax handouts they see fit – by drastically slashing funding to programs that help the most vulnerable Americans, most notably Medicaid and SNAP (sometimes called food stamps).⁴ A recent analysis by the Yale Budget Lab found that the net effect of the potential combination of tax giveaways and social safety net cuts proposed by Republicans could result in the poorest Americans actually losing more than \$1,000 a year. While the richest Americans – those making \$3.2 million or more – could gain more than \$180,000.⁵

Some of the business provisions in the Trump tax cuts were made permanent, such as the reduction in the corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 21 percent. Others, however, such as the 2017 law's new 20 percent deduction available for business owners who "pass-through" their income – where they pay taxes on their business via income tax rather than

¹ Catie Edmondson et. al, *House Passes G.O.P. Budget Teeing Up Enormous Tax and Spending Cuts*, THE NEW YORK TIMES (Feb. 25, 2025), <https://citizen.short.gy/6HLbkw> and Claudia Grisales, *Senate GOP passes budget plan, setting up a critical next phase for Trump agenda*, NPR (April 5, 2025), <https://citizen.short.gy/MHWMIZ>.

² The tax cuts were enacted through the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, see Catie Edmondson et. al, *House Passes G.O.P. Budget Teeing Up Enormous Tax and Spending Cuts*, THE NEW YORK TIMES (Feb. 25, 2025), <https://citizen.short.gy/6HLbkw> and Catie Edmondson et. al, *Republicans May Try Budget Math that Doesn't Count Trump Tax Cuts*, THE WASHINGTON POST (Jan. 15, 2025), <https://citizen.short.gy/1cepA5>.

³ Chuck Marr, Samantha Jacoby and George Fenton, *The 2017 Trump Tax Law Was Skewed to the Rich, Expensive, and Failed to Deliver on Its Promises*, CENTER ON BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES (June 13, 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/1GDCwT>.

⁴ Sahil Kapur, *Republicans Can't Meet Their own Budget Target Without Cutting Medicare or Medicaid, Budget Office Says*, NBC NEWS (March 5, 2025), <https://citizen.short.gy/nsZUb4> and Harris Eppsteiner and John Ricco, *Illustrative Distributional Effects of Policies Consistent with the House Concurrent Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2025*, THE BUDGET LAB (March 19, 2025), <https://citizen.short.gy/MDqmns>.

⁵ Harris Eppsteiner and John Ricco, *Illustrative Distributional Effects of Policies Consistent with the House Concurrent Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2025*, THE BUDGET LAB (March 19, 2025), <https://citizen.short.gy/MDqmns>.

a separate corporate tax-- are set to end this year or are already beginning to phase out.⁶ In 2024, more than half of the benefits from the pass-through deduction went to households with incomes of more than \$1 million, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP).⁷

In total, CBPP found that in the first year after the first Trump tax cuts were enacted, 2018, more than half of the benefits of the corporate-specific provisions went to households in the top 5 percent income bracket.⁸

Public Citizen investigated one reason why Republicans might propose to shower wealthy individuals and profitable businesses with additional tax cuts funded on the backs of the country's most vulnerable: immense corporate lobbying power. We analyzed one full year of lobbying disclosures – 2024 – to compile all lobbyists included in lobbying disclosures that indicated lobbying was done on tax issues.

Our investigation concludes that the discussions in Washington, D.C. related to federal tax policy were dominated by those representing corporate and wealthy interests:

- More than six thousand lobbyists descended on Capitol Hill in 2024 to lobby on tax policy. The total amounts to nearly half of all federal lobbyists.
- For every member of Congress, there were 11 tax lobbyists in 2024.
- Many individual lobbyists were hired by multiple clients to lobby on tax issues. More than 85 percent of their work was done representing corporate interests.
- The U.S. Chamber of Commerce sent 99 lobbyists to Capitol Hill to influence tax policy, the most of any lobbying entity. The Chamber was followed by Verizon (73), Intuit (71), Blue Cross and Blue Shield (71), and the Business Roundtable (68).
- Out of the top 100 entities hiring the most tax lobbyists, all but two represented corporate interests.
- Most of the corporations and corporate trade groups with the largest tax lobbyist corps in 2024 lobbied specifically on the Trump tax cuts.

⁶ Chuck Marr, Samantha Jacoby and George Fenton, *The 2017 Trump Tax Law Was Skewed to the Rich, Expensive, and Failed to Deliver on Its Promises*, CENTER ON BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES (June 13, 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/1GDCwTr> & Reference Table: *Expiring Provisions in the "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act" (TCJA, P.L. 115-97)*, CONGRESS.GOV (Nov. 11, 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/mk0Sod>.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *Id.*

Nearly Half of All Federal Lobbyists Lobbied the Federal Government on Tax Issues in 2024

Public Citizen searched all lobbying disclosures filed in 2024 for lobbying activities that fit two main criteria: those that had the “TAX” lobbying issue code,⁹ and / or those that included the word “tax” in the specific lobbying issues field – the field in which the lobbying activities are summarized.¹⁰ We define lobbying done that matches one or both these criteria as lobbying done on “tax issues.”

In 2024, there were 6,107 federal lobbyists that lobbied on tax issues. According to OpenSecrets, there were 13,043 total federal lobbyists last year,¹¹ meaning nearly half of all lobbyists – 47% – lobbied on tax issues. There are 535 members of Congress. Thus, in 2024, there were 11 tax lobbyists for every member of Congress.

Not every lobbyist on tax issues lobbied on specific tax issues are likely to be included in the bill the Republicans eventually produce. Further, for many lobbyists, taxes are just one of the many issues they lobby on. Due to the vagueness of the disclosures, in some cases we can glean little more than that the fact the lobbyist was paid to lobby on something related to taxes (e.g., they disclosed lobbying on “tax policy” generally).

When it comes to tax policy in 2025, though, the extension of the Trump tax cuts, along with whatever tax plans the majority proposes using their budget reconciliation vehicle, can be passed by simple majority and will undoubtedly be at the center of much – if not most – of the tax policy lobbying done this year.

This analysis highlights not just the sheer number of tax lobbyists that have inundated Capitol Hill but the narrow interests those individuals represent.

More Than 85 Percent of Hired Tax Lobbyists Represented Corporate Interests in 2024

Many of the more than 6,000 lobbyists we found lobbying on tax issues in 2024 often represented more than one client on tax issues, some represented dozens of clients.

When we examine the number of lobbyists on an issue, the number of unique lobbyists (individual people) does not reveal the true scope of lobbying and obscures changes in lobbying activity. For example, if five new corporations started lobbying on taxes but hired a lobbyist that had already been lobbying on taxes, just looking at the lobbyist total

⁹ *Lobbying Issue Codes*, CONGRESS.GOV, <https://citizen.short.gy/gFIBxH>.

¹⁰ See an example, here: Lobbying Disclosure, Chamber of Commerce of the U.S.A., SECRETARY OF THE SENATE LOBBYING DISCLOSURE DATABASE (Q4 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/okK6XT>. We also searched for variations of the word “tax,” including “taxes,” “taxing,” “taxation,” “taxpayer,” “taxing,” “taxed,” and “taxable.”

¹¹ *Lobbying Data Summary*, OPENSECRETS, <https://www.opensecrets.org/federal-lobbying>.

would show no uptick in activity. Counting each unique lobbyist client relationship is a better metric to show changes in lobbying activity (e.g. when the same person lobbies on tax issues on behalf of Walmart, Chevron, and the Business Roundtable, that same lobbyist is counted three times).

Looking at the data this way, in 2024, clients hired more than 13,000 lobbyists to lobby on tax issues throughout the year. On average each quarter, clients sent more than 10,500 lobbyists to lobby on tax issues. More than 85 percent of those lobbyists represented corporate interests each quarter. [Figure 1]

Figure 1 – 2024 Tax Lobbyists by Those Representing Corporate Interests vs. All Others



Source: Public Citizen’s analysis of lobbying data from the House Office of the Clerk.

Public Citizen determined which lobbyists represented corporate interests by examining each entity paying for the lobbying. Most of the lobbyists falling into the corporate interest category are those hired by large corporations and powerful corporate trade groups. Lobbying categorized as not done on behalf corporate interests were done by those representing non-profit advocacy organizations, universities, professional associations, government institutions and non-profit hospitals.

It is important to note that many of the entities categorized as not representing corporate interests are likely not lobbying against such interests. Our methodology is conservative. Many non-profit hospital systems, for example, operate similarly to for-profit entities.¹²

¹² One could certainly argue that despite their non-profit status, some hospitals operate similarly to large corporations, see Elisabeth Rosenthal, *Why Many Nonprofit (Wink, Wink) Hospitals Are Rolling in Money*, KFF HEALTH NEWS (July 29, 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/zGsXRp>.

The entities responsible for hiring the most tax lobbyists in 2024 include some of the biggest names in corporate America. The corporate trade group the U.S. Chamber of Commerce leads all lobbying entities with 99 tax issue lobbyists in 2024. Only one organization of the top 20, the AARP, represents non-corporate interests (AARP opposed the Trump tax cuts in 2027).¹³ [Table 1]

Table 1 – Corporations and Trade Groups Hiring the Most Tax Lobbyists in 2024 (Top 20)

Lobbying Client	Represents Corporate Interests	2024 Tax Lobbyists
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	Yes	99
Verizon	Yes	73
Intuit	Yes	71
Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association*	Yes	71
Business Roundtable	Yes	68
American Chemistry Council	Yes	58
AARP	No	57
Altria Client Services LLC	Yes	56
Constellation Energy Generation, LLC	Yes	48
Amgen	Yes	48
Walmart	Yes	44
Rocket Companies	Yes	44
Exxon	Yes	44
NCTA - The Internet & Television Association	Yes	43
FedEx	Yes	43
Biotechnology Innovation Organization	Yes	43
National Automobile Dealers Association	Yes	42
Duke Energy	Yes	39
NextEra Energy	Yes	38
International Paper	Yes	37
Edison Electric Institute	Yes	37
American Bankers Association	Yes	37

Source: Public Citizen’s analysis of lobbying data from the House Office of the Clerk.

* Lobbyists for Elevance Health are included in this total.

¹³ Angela Cortez, *AARP Opposes Tax Bill*, AARP (Dec. 19, 2017), <https://citizen.short.gy/Bh7NNv>.

In total, just two of the top 100 lobbying entities in terms of the number of tax lobbyists hired in 2024 represent non-corporate interests.

While some entities from Table 1 report lobbying more broadly on “tax policy,” or “tax issues” related to their industry,¹⁴ more than half of the companies and trade groups from Table 1 explicitly mention that – in 2024 – they lobbied on the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act: the Chamber,¹⁵ Verizon,¹⁶ Altria,¹⁷ the American Bankers Association,¹⁸ the American Chemistry Council,¹⁹ Amgen,²⁰ the Business Roundtable,²¹ the Edison Electric Institute,²² Exxon,²³ FedEx,²⁴ International Paper,²⁵ the NCTA,²⁶ and the National Automobile Dealers Association.²⁷

Conclusion

Shortly after the 2017 Trump tax cuts were passed, some companies publicized anecdotal pay increases and bonuses for their workers to purportedly tout the success of the cuts.

¹⁴ Lobbying Disclosure, OGR on behalf of Constellation Energy Generation, LLC, SECRETARY OF THE SENATE LOBBYING DISCLOSURE DATABASE (Q4 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/Ldw63h> & Lobbying Disclosure, Williams and Jensen, PLLC on behalf of Elevance Health, Inc. (formerly reported as Anthem, Inc.), SECRETARY OF THE SENATE LOBBYING DISCLOSURE DATABASE (Q2 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/2qHV0y>.

¹⁵ Lobbying Disclosure, Chamber of Commerce of the U.S.A., SECRETARY OF THE SENATE LOBBYING DISCLOSURE DATABASE (Q4 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/aewBqe>.

¹⁶ Lobbying Disclosure, Polaris Government Relations, LLC on behalf of Verizon Communications, Inc. and various subsidiaries, SECRETARY OF THE SENATE LOBBYING DISCLOSURE DATABASE (Q4 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/oAiEyG>.

¹⁷ Lobbying Disclosure, Polaris Government Relations, LLC on behalf of Altria Client Services LLC, SECRETARY OF THE SENATE LOBBYING DISCLOSURE DATABASE (Q4 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/x48PKb>.

¹⁸ Lobbying Disclosure, American Bankers Association, SECRETARY OF THE SENATE LOBBYING DISCLOSURE DATABASE (Q4 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/S12Gmy>.

¹⁹ Lobbying Disclosure, OGR on behalf of American Chemistry Council, SECRETARY OF THE SENATE LOBBYING DISCLOSURE DATABASE (Q4 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/XyYmBp>.

²⁰ Lobbying Disclosure, Amgen, Inc, SECRETARY OF THE SENATE LOBBYING DISCLOSURE DATABASE (Q4 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/gVOXRX>.

²¹ Lobbying Disclosure, The Business Roundtable, SECRETARY OF THE SENATE LOBBYING DISCLOSURE DATABASE (Q1 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/T7qaLN>.

²² Lobbying Disclosure, Capitol Council on behalf of The Edison Electric Institute, SECRETARY OF THE SENATE LOBBYING DISCLOSURE DATABASE (Q4 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/6N7TMK>.

²³ Lobbying Disclosure, Exxon Mobil Corp, SECRETARY OF THE SENATE LOBBYING DISCLOSURE DATABASE (Q4 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/FaocE2>.

²⁴ Lobbying Disclosure, FedEx Corporation, SECRETARY OF THE SENATE LOBBYING DISCLOSURE DATABASE (Q4 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/uftsJ5>.

²⁵ Lobbying Disclosure, Fierce Government Relations on behalf of International Paper Company, SECRETARY OF THE SENATE LOBBYING DISCLOSURE DATABASE (Q4 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/PF2bjs>.

²⁶ Lobbying Disclosure, Fierce Government Relations on behalf of National Cable and Telecommunications Association, SECRETARY OF THE SENATE LOBBYING DISCLOSURE DATABASE (Q3 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/Kmgr0O>.

²⁷ Lobbying Disclosure, Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schrek, LLP on behalf of National Automobile Dealers Association, SECRETARY OF THE SENATE LOBBYING DISCLOSURE DATABASE (Q4 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/KngH4y>.

The reality is workers ended up seeing a tiny portion of the Trump tax cut promised windfall.²⁸ The money did not – as it never does – trickle down.

The pending Trump-Republican tax proposal, is tax policy of the rich, by the rich, and for the rich.²⁹

The 2017 Trump tax cuts were drafted with an end date due to the cost, and that price tag has only risen in the years since. Rather than additional tax giveaways to the rich, it's time Republicans in Congress focused on true tax reform that will create additional revenue to invest in communities.

²⁸ Kathryn Kranhold, *Big Businesses Promised Wage Hikes From Trump's Tax Cuts. What Actually Happened?*, THE CENTER FOR PUBLIC INTEGRITY (Feb. 12, 2019), <https://citizen.short.gy/vLQoBY> and Chris Matthews, *Trump Promised his Tax Cuts Would Boost Wages by \$4,000 — but Most Workers Saw Few Gains, Study Finds*, MARKETWATCH (Sept. 12, 2024), <https://citizen.short.gy/LpKckB>.

²⁹ President Lincoln famously said, “a government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth,” <https://citizen.short.gy/W9Xmfc>.