

UNEQUAL: AN AGENDA TO TURN THE TIDE AGAINST EXTREME INEQUALITY

The U.S. is home to more billionaires than any other country and is the world's largest economy, yet over 40% of the population is considered poor or low income, homelessness is at a record high, and many workers and families are struggling to get by.

Such extreme inequality is not inevitable. Past policy choices played a central role in shaping today's highly unequal wealth, wages, and well-being. Policymakers should focus on an agenda that will deliver for ordinary people by reducing inequality. The proposals that follow are a start, and can help strengthen the economy, address persistent racial and gender inequalities, and fulfill basic rights.

UNRIG THE TAX CODE

Policymakers should unite behind [a tax code](#) that can reduce inequality and help ordinary people. Such action requires critical reforms to:

 **TAX THE RICH:** Lawmakers should ensure that the ultrawealthy pay their fair share, including by increasing taxes on extreme wealth and the highest incomes.

Current proposals include:

- [Billionaires Income Tax](#)—Taxes unrealized gains on assets such as stocks for taxpayers with over \$100 million in income or \$1 billion in assets.
- [Equal Tax Act](#)—Eliminates the preferential tax rate for long-term capital gains and dividends over \$1 million.
- [Oligarch Act](#)—Imposes a 2–8% wealth tax on fortunes greater than 1,000 times the median household wealth.

 **ENSURE CORPORATIONS AND WALL STREET PAY THEIR FAIR SHARE:** Lawmakers should use the tax code to rein in corporate power, including by increasing taxes on the largest companies, ending tax breaks for polluting industries, and taxing harmful corporate practices.

Current proposals include:

- [End Oil and Gas Tax Subsidies Act](#)—Eliminates numerous tax breaks received by oil and gas companies.
- [End Polluter Welfare Act](#)—Eliminates over \$190 billion in tax loopholes and federal subsidies for the fossil fuel industry.
- [Tax Excessive CEO Pay Act](#)—Imposes a higher tax rate on corporations that have a CEO-to-median-worker pay ratio greater than 50-to-1.

- [Wall Street Tax Act](#)—Imposes a 0.1% excise tax on specified financial transactions, such as the purchase of stocks or derivatives.

 **MAKE THE TAX CODE WORK FOR ORDINARY PEOPLE:** Lawmakers should ensure that the tax code benefits low-income and working-class families, and that it advances racial and gender justice.

Current proposals include:

- [American Family Act](#)—Strengthens the child tax credit by increasing the credit amount and making the full credit accessible to the lowest-income families.
- [Cost of Living Tax Cut for Working Americans Act](#)—Exempts income below the national cost of living from taxation, paid for by a surtax on income over \$1 million.

 **STRENGTHEN GLOBAL COOPERATION:** Lawmakers should stop the global race to the bottom that enables companies to avoid paying taxes, by curbing profit shifting and supporting international efforts to improve global tax rules.

Current proposals include:

- [No Tax Breaks for Outsourcing Act](#)—Ensures that multinational corporations pay the same tax rate on profits earned abroad as they do on profits in the U.S.



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REIMAGINE THE SOCIAL SAFETY NET

Among large, wealthy countries, the U.S. has one of the least redistributive tax and transfer systems. Policymakers should reform the safety net to reduce needless poverty and hardship, and ensure that people's basic human rights are met.



REJECT HARMFUL CUTS THAT MAKE A PUNITIVE SYSTEM

WORSE: Recent reductions to existing safety net programs will hurt millions of people by impeding access to health care, food, and more. Lawmakers should reject these cuts and instead invest in programs that reduce poverty and inequality.

Current proposals include:

- [Restoring Food Security for American Families and Farmers Act](#)—Reverses the cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program made by the One Big Beautiful Bill Act.



ABOLISH POVERTY AND EMBRACE AN UNCOMPROMISING VISION OF A SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM:

This could include [proven programs](#) like guaranteed income, baby bonds, and a federal job guarantee.

Current proposals include:

- [Guaranteed Income Pilot Program Act](#)—Establishes a pilot program to test the viability of a federally funded income support program that utilizes direct cash payments.



STRENGTHEN AND GUARANTEE INEQUALITY-BUSTING PUBLIC SERVICES:

Policymakers should invest in high-quality, universal public services like education and transportation, and should explore public options in other critical areas that are key to addressing inequality, including health care, child care, pharmaceuticals, groceries, and banking.

SUPPORT WORKERS' RIGHTS

Policymakers must help build the power of workers to take on runaway corporate greed. When workers thrive, our communities and the economy thrive too. Commonsense policies on wages, protections, and collective bargaining support workers and their families—while reducing inequality.



STRENGTHEN WORKERS' RIGHTS TO FORM UNIONS AND COLLECTIVELY BARGAIN:

Policymakers should [eliminate exclusions](#) from the rights to organize and collectively bargain, including for agricultural workers, domestic workers, and independent contractors. They should support sectoral bargaining alongside workplace-level bargaining and fully resource the National Labor Relations Board.

Current proposals include:

- [PRO Act \(Protecting the Right to Organize Act\)](#)—Facilitates initial collective bargaining agreements, punishes employers for violating workers' rights to organize, and closes loopholes around employee misclassification.



RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE:

Policymakers must [raise the minimum wage](#), eliminate minimum wage exclusions, and abolish subminimum wages. Minimum wage increases should also be indexed to inflation.

Current proposals include:

- [Raise the Wage Act](#)—Increases the federal minimum wage to \$17, eliminates subminimum wages for tipped workers, youth, and workers with disabilities, and indexes future increases to median wage growth.



STRENGTHEN WORKER PROTECTIONS:

Policymakers must [enact protections](#) that enable workers to care for themselves and their families, including paid sick and family leave, stronger equal pay laws, and protections for domestic workers.

Current proposals include:

- [FAMILY Act](#)—Establishes a permanent national paid family and medical leave program.



SUPPORT WORKER OWNERSHIP:

Policymakers should support broad-based worker ownership, including through procurement and facilitating access to capital. Worker ownership allows workers to [build wealth](#) and access strong benefits while reducing inequality.

REBALANCE POWER

Enacting meaningful reforms will require challenging vested interests and rebalancing power. It is a matter of backing people—workers, families, and communities—and also of breaking up extreme concentrations of power in the economy. Rebalancing power entails many of the proposals listed above in this document, as well as:

-  **ADDRESSING EXTREME CORPORATE CONCENTRATION THROUGH ANTITRUST:** Policymakers should embrace the full potential of the law to break up monopolies and block harmful mergers, and they should reform rules to prevent monopoly power from accruing in the first place.
-  **ENHANCING U.S. DEMOCRACY:** Policymakers should strengthen voting rights, enact campaign finance reform, and protect the integrity and availability of federal data.

MORE ABOUT OXFAM'S WORK

To learn more about Oxfam America's work on inequality, explore these resources:



OXFAM REPORT
[UNEQUAL: The Rise of a New American Oligarchy and the Agenda We Need](#)



OXFAM WEBSITE
[Corporate Driven Inequality](#)



OXFAM REPORT
[Best States to Work in the U.S.](#)



OXFAM POLICY BRIEF
[Fair Taxes, Stronger Futures](#)



OXFAM REPORT
[The Crisis of Low Wages](#)



OXFAM REPORT
[Where Hard Work Doesn't Pay Off: An Index of U.S. Labor Policies Compared to Peer Nations](#)

The need for a different direction is clear. To turn the tide against extreme inequality requires an agenda that focuses on improving the lives of ordinary people.

FIGHTING INEQUALITY TO BUILD A BETTER WORLD

Oxfam believes that poverty is a policy choice, and that the ultrawealthy and giant corporations have hijacked our systems to benefit a select few. We are working to redress the balance of power, putting it back in the hands of working families in the U.S. and around the world.

US POLICY & ADVOCACY

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