

Doug LaMalfa: Republican House Member Voting to Make His District and Constituents Poorer

****DOUG LAMALFA****

District 1: Richvale–Northeast California

R+16: Safeness of Seat (2012)

31% : Percent of Returns

5.1%: Percent of AGI

\$770 million SALT in 2014

275,000 tax returns in 2014

\$15.069 billion AGI in 2014

\$0.7729 billion deduction amount in 2014

54.5%: Income <\$50K/year

18.5%: Poverty Rate

33.2%: White Collar

3.2% : Income >\$200K/year



\$770 million. That was the amount in state and local tax deductions that Doug LaMalfa's constituents in California's 1st congressional district took in 2014. 31% of tax returns would have been penalized had state and local tax payments been added into the federal income tax base. We do not have sufficient detail to produce a precise estimate of how much taxes would have gone up—the Trump administration could, if it wanted to—but the rough ballpark number is 200 million: the Republican tax bill will, if enacted, take 200 million dollars a year out of the incomes and spending of Doug LaMalfa's constituents.

The relatively poor (for California) 1st district contains only a small slice of people who are possible beneficiaries from the tax bill: 3.2% of returns in 2014 reported adjusted gross incomes greater than 200,000 dollars a year. But by the same token that was one-ninth of the number of returns that itemized SALT. While incomes, and thus state income taxes, and property taxes are lower than in highly-prosperous booming coastal California, adding people's state and local taxes to the federal income tax base would still take a substantial bite out of their budgets.

The 1st may well be the safest, least competitive Republican district in California. The 1st district is the northeast corner of the state. It includes three small cities: the resource-based Red Bluff and Redding, and Chico with its campus of the Cal State branch of the California state university system, with the bulk of its population and

economic activity thoroughly rural.

Doug LaMalfa may thus believe he faces few political risks in siding with House leadership against his constituents on this tax bill. But it is not something that anybody would have anticipated: LaMalfa has been a district-focused member of the House, working cooperatively with his next-door neighbor John Garamendi on their important issues. He chose the Agricultural and Natural Resource Committees for his assignments, rather than higher-profile assignments in foreign affairs and other national issues or assignments of greater interest to lobbyists. His vote for the tax bill in the first round simply does not fit.

(Assuming, of course, there has not been a programming mistake in moving from zipcode-level IRS Statistics of Income to Congressional District level. Programming mistakes are easy to make.)