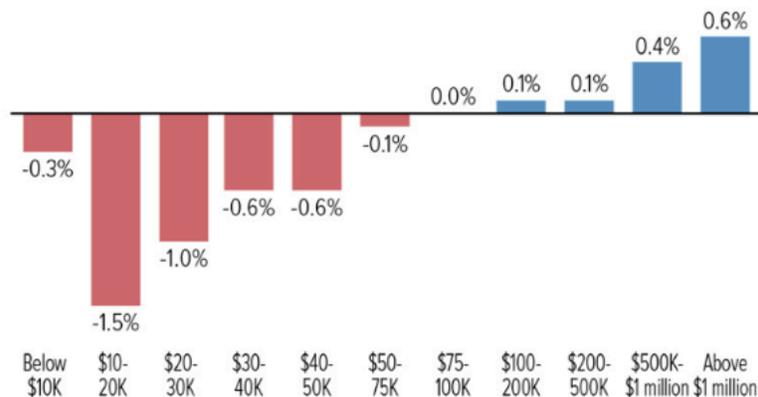


Eleven California Republican House Members Voting to Make Their Districts and Constituents Poorer

- 2.97 billion dollars: [Mimi Walters](#) (Laguna Niguel, 45) (R+3): 46% of returns, 8.5% of AGI, .
- 1.89 billion dollars: [Ed Royce](#) (Fullerton, 39) (Even): 40% of returns, 7.6% of AGI.
- 1.49 billion dollars: [Steve Knight](#) (Palmdale, 25) (Even): 42% of returns, 7.4% of AGI.
- 1.34 billion dollars: [Duncan Hunter](#) (Lakeside, 50) (R+11): 37% of returns, 6.5% of AGI.
- 1.28 billion dollars: [Ken Calvert](#) (Corona, 42) (R+9): 42% of returns, 6.9% of AGI.
- 960 million dollars: [Kevin McCarthy](#) (Bakersfield, 23) (R+14): 34% of returns, 5.9% of AGI.
- 910 million dollars: [Devin Nunes](#) (Tulare, 22) (R+8): 30% of returns, 5.5% of AGI.
- 860 million dollars: [Jeff Denham](#) (Atwater, 10) (Even): 30% of returns, 5.3% of AGI.
- 770 million dollars: [Doug LaMalfa](#) (Richvale, 1) (R+11): 31% of returns, 5.1% of AGI.
- 540 million dollars: [Paul Cook](#) (Yucca Valley, 8) (R+9): 29% of returns, 4.6% of AGI.
- 350 million dollars: [David Valadao](#) (Hanford, 21) (D+5): 17% of returns, 3.5% of AGI.

JCT: Revised Senate Finance Tax Bill Raises Taxes on Low- and Moderate-Income People, Gives Tax Cuts to the Top

Average percentage change in after-tax income, 2027



Source: CBPP calculations based on Joint Committee on Taxation table JCX-58-17

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The Republican tax bill moving through the Congress in late 2017 focuses on and targets one group above all: the highly prosperous and enterprising traditionally-Republican upper middle class of California. They have been stalwart Republicans for decades, nay, generations: they are Ronald Reagan's, Richard Nixon's, and Herbert Hoover's people.

It is true that the allegiance of California's highly prosperous and enterprising upper middle

class to the Republican Party has been shaken in recent decades. But name me a traditionally Republican demographic whose allegiance has not been shaken. Today there are three principal markers of likely Republican allegiance:

1. Whiteness.
2. Wealth.
3. Less formal education.

The highly prosperous and enterprising traditionally-Republican upper middle class of California has two and a half of those, with a large slice of it having left school in the 1970s and 1980s with only a B.A. or, indeed, not even a B.A.

We get why today's Republican Party has decided to target the highly prosperous and enterprising traditionally-Republican upper middle class of California in its tax bill. It has decided to do so for four reasons:

1. Their votes are unlikely to elect a Republican senator or president for at least a decade.
2. They are well-off, and so a lot of money can be raised from them to finance the tax cuts for the plutocrats that are the key goal of the bill.
3. They are easy to target: simply add their state and local tax payments (SALT) into the federal tax base.
4. Pundits and strategists are telling Republican politicians that the prosperous upper middle class, especially in liberal states, is not the Republican base of the future: the base of the future is composed of plutocrats interested in money and activists interested in having their ethno-racial anxieties and prejudices validated.

Nationwide, the upper middle class appears likely to be a beneficiary—albeit a very small beneficiary—from the tax bill. When it is fully phased in, it will load costs on income slices up to 100,000 dollars a year, provide very small benefits to those with incomes in the upper middle class 100,000 to 500,000 dollar a year range, and then give the big presents to the rich receiving more than 500,000 dollars a year, and the biggest presents to the superrich.

But not the highly enterprising and prosperous upper middle class of California. No longer the core of the party in the eyes of ideologues, activists, and professional staffers and politicians nationwide, and (i) irrelevant for the senate and presidency, (ii) rich and worth targeting, and (iii) easy to target, they were in the crosshairs. In California, you have to receive more than 200,000 a year in income for you to even possibly be a plausible perhaps long-run gainer from the bill, and receive more than 500,000 a year before you have sufficient income from passive pass-through sources (or sources that can be rapidly transformed by accountants into passive pass-through sources) and from corporate capital to be a likely beneficiary.

Standing in the way of this plan, however, were the fourteen members of the California Republican House of Representatives caucus: Ken Calvert, Paul Cook, Jeff Denham, Duncan Hunter, Darryl Issa, Steve Knight, Doug LaMalfa, Kevin McCarthy, Tom McClintock, Devin Nunes, Dana Rohrbacher, Ed Royce, David Valadao, and Mimi Walters. They had all been elected with the very strong support of California's highly prosperous and enterprising traditionally-Republican upper middle class.

Their job was to represent the interests and views of their constituents. No matter what theory of legislative representation they hold, it was not their job to encourage and support the

loading of a greatly outsized portion of the costs of the bill on their own core constituents who had given them their votes. Yet only three of the fourteen members of the California Republican House of Representatives caucus—Darryl Issa, Tom McClintock, and Dana Rohrabacher—were willing to defy Republican leadership and vote against the tax bill when it went through the House of Representatives the first time.

Let's make sure they stand firm when it comes through again.

The other eleven feared not God nor man nor constituent, and voted to make their districts and their constituents poorer.

These eleven are in the process of doing something that political scientists find quite amazing. In one case, that of Republican leadership honcho McCarthy, there is no great person. People who rise high in the house leadership may return to their home states to run for governor or mayor attempt to move over to the United States Senate. Otherwise, however, they are Washington animals: their future, after a few terms in leadership, is to cash out their electoral chips and cash in financial chips on K St.

But the other ten?

You might say that the Republican base is no longer the prosperous upper middle class: that the Republicans today have a financial base of plutocrats and an activist base of old, scared people who are not especially well off but who do feel that they have something to lose, especially when people who do not look like themselves move into the neighborhood. But all such pundit and strategist takes are not, in fact, true. The things that most durably predict allegiance to the Republican Party in America today are: whiteness, wealth, and relatively little formal education. The prosperous upper-middle-class of the Republican districts in California has at least 2 1/2 of those three factors. That, in fact, is why those districts are republican district. The other ten have a lot to lose and very little to gain by deciding that their constituents are party leaders in Washington, lobbyists on K-Street, and scattered plutocrats few of whom live in their districts—at least, a lot to lose if they plan on or want to ever live in California again.

Perhaps they can be flipped for the next vote, and made to remember where they came from, and to whom they owe their jobs.

If not, certainly the people of California can be informed of what they have done—and thus the eleven can be made to recognize that they will have no post-Congress future in California, but will have to stay in Washington DC after they lose a primary or general election or decide to retire from Congress.

Congressional Districts Ranked by Percentage of Returns with SALT Deduction, 2014Table 1

Tax Returns	District AGI	Deduction Returns	Deduction Amount	District	% Returns	Deduction % AGI	Member
339962.29	34883071.452	157688.79	2968183.996	45	46.4%	8.5%	Walters
302865.56	23930812.728	134451.62	1701121.453	4	44.4%	7.1%	McClintock
347093.15	37263276.785	145635.71	3449063.156	48	42%	9.3%	Rohrbacher
326902.63	31945428.506	136596.05	2706322.234	49	41.8%	8.5%	Issa
303608.09	18544962.18	126711.22	1281896.838	42	41.7%	6.9%	Calvert
303562.04	20131271.445	126033.19	1494712.745	25	41.5%	7.4%	Knight
328068.29	24575043.729	132176.98	1879686.276	39	40.3%	7.6%	Royce
317955.68	20810994.673	116672.45	1342479.232	50	36.7%	6.5%	Hunter
273532.03	16247381.923	92979.85	959531.2	23	34%	5.9%	McCarthy
274589.17	15068620.732	83852.84	772888.094	1	30.5%	5.1%	LaMalfa
293513.77	16263650.764	89163.57	856186.357	10	30.4%	5.3%	Denham
287719.16	16627419.615	85614.41	912353.886	22	29.8%	5.5%	Nunes
251176.25	11735716.239	72101.01	534976.352	8	28.7%	4.6%	Cook
250179.29	10018979.059	43383.93	353887.788	21	17.3%	3.5%	Valadao