# Coalition Urges President Trump to Index Capital Gains Taxes to Inflation

January 22, 2019

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We urge you to utilize your executive authority to remove the inflation tax on savings and investment by indexing the calculation of capital gains taxes to inflation.

We represent a broad cross-section of conservative, free-market, pro-business, and pro-family organizations that were very supportive of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017. Ending the inflation tax will build on the success of that law and deliver a booster shot to economic growth and the stock market.

When a family or a business saves money and buys a stock, real estate, or any other asset, the investment grows in value over time. Some of that growth is due to the asset appreciating in real terms, and some of that growth is merely due to the effect of inflation making everything more expensive.

Our tax system does not distinguish between these two increases in savings – the economic growth increase, and the merely inflationary increase. The whole gain is taxable. According to the non-partisan Tax Foundation, fully one-third of all unrealized capital gains are due only to inflation.

According to legal scholarship going back decades, the executive branch can define cost basis in an investment in such a way that the inflation tax on savings can be eliminated. Rather than having to pay tax on both real and inflationary gains, a family or business selling an asset would only pay tax on the real gain, or the gain derived from economic growth.

This policy is a simple matter of fairness. American families and job creators should not have to pay taxes on phantom income. Our tax brackets are indexed to inflation for a reason--we don't think a worker who gets a raise that barely keeps pace with inflation should face a tax increase. The same principle should apply to savings.

We believe taking inflation out of the tax on savings will be welcomed by investors and will boost the stock market given that a cut in the tax rate on investment was not a part of tax reform.

Taking bold executive action now--without having to go to Congress--will restore confidence in financial markets and help bolster every 401(k), IRA, and 529 plan in America. It completes the unfinished promise of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

Just as tax reform resulted in the repatriation of hundreds of billions of dollars overseas to be reinvested here in America, ending the inflation tax on savings will result in hundreds of billions of dollars in unlocked investments, with the resulting capital reallocated more efficiently. The result will be more jobs created and faster economic growth.

With a divided Congress, any effort to pass Tax Reform 2.0 or additional middle-class tax reduction is unlikely. On the other hand, ending the inflation tax can be achieved through the administration's executive authority.

We urge you to swiftly use this authority and stand ready to work with you and your team to achieve this tax cut for the American people.

Sincerely,

Grover Norquist
President, Americans for Tax Reform

James L. Martin
Founder/Chairman, 60 Plus Association

Saulius "Saul" Anuzis
President, 60 Plus Association

Phil Kerpen
President, American Commitment

Matt Schlapp
Chairman, American Conservative Union

Steve Pociask
President / CEO, The American Consumer Institute

Lisa B. Nelson
CEO, ALEC Action

Chip Rogers
President and CEO, AAHOA

Dan Weber
President, Association of Mature American Citizens

Norm Singleton
President, Campaign for Liberty

Bob Carlstrom
President, The Carlstrom Group

Andrew F. Quinlan
President, Center for Freedom and Prosperity

Ryan Ellis
President, Center for a Free Economy

Jeffrey Mazzella
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Tom Schatz
President, Citizens Against Government Waste

Chuck Muth
President, Citizen Outreach (Nevada)

David McIntosh
President, Club for Growth

Matthew Kandrach
President, Consumer Action for a Strong Economy

Katie McAuliffe
Executive Director, Digital Liberty

Palmer Schoening
President, Family Business Coalition

Rick Watson
Co-Chair, Florida Center-Right Coalition

Adam Brandon
President and CEO, FreedomWorks

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Paul Gessing
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Karen Kerrigan
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David Williams
President, Taxpayer Protection Alliance

Jenny Beth Martin
Honorary Chairman, Tea Party Patriots Action

Tom Zawistowski
President, We the People Convention