

2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

**National Taxpayers
Union**

**National Taxpayers
Union Foundation**



50TH ANNIVERSARY





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President's Letter

Dear supporters and friends,

2019, the year of National Taxpayers Union's (NTU's) milestone 50th anniversary, was arguably our best yet. Along with our research affiliate, National Taxpayers Union Foundation (NTUF), we grew significantly, measurably influenced policy, and built the infrastructure that will enable us to increase our impact for years to come.

Most notably, we made important progress toward our goal of ensuring that Americans are free to pursue their dreams without the heavy hand of government holding them back. Less than two years after the passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, NTU spearheaded the effort among citizen groups to lobby for bipartisan passage of the Taxpayer First Act, the fifth major IRS reform bill signed into law since 1988. Not only did legislators finally acknowledge the pressing need for more changes at the IRS to better assist the people it's supposed to serve, but they made concrete steps toward making those changes into a reality. And NTU's longstanding expertise in the area of taxpayer rights was instrumental as they did so.

Members of Congress, the Administration, and the conservative community looked to us for guidance and encouragement when a few last-minute issues with the legislation nearly stalled its passage this past summer. Thankfully, our hard work paid off, and the Taxpayer First Act put many vital provisions for taxpayer protection in place: it created an independent Office of Appeals, addressed harsh collection tactics with statutory safeguards, and provided new guidance and managerial authority to fix some of the IRS's worst customer service problems.

Never ones to rest on our laurels, we didn't stop working once IRS reform cleared the president's desk. Through projects such as our Interstate Commerce Initiative, Taxpayers' Budget Office, and Free Trade Initiative, NTU Foundation engaged the policy community and public officials with essential details that make the difference between superficial fixes and genuine solutions to pressing taxpayer issues. From working with Michigan lawmakers to establish sensible rules on e-commerce taxation, to establishing a consultative relationship with the Congressional Budget Office Director himself, to navigating thorny trade issues with Trump Administration officials, we are bringing our expertise to an ever-growing audience and exerting influence at higher levels than ever before.

Targeted media outreach has been an invaluable tool as we've increased our reach. Thanks to expanded relationships with high level policy reporters from Beltway and trade publications, our voice landed in outlets it never had before. We placed an astounding 120 op-eds in publications across the country. A variety of print and broadcast outlets, including *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *Politico*, *Forbes*, *Bloomberg*, *Tucker Carlson Tonight*, and *Fox & Friends*, regularly quoted and featured our experts.

To maintain our strong growth trajectory, we also launched exciting new initiatives. NTU's 50th Anniversary not only gave us the opportunity to reflect on our 50 years of advocating for taxpayers, but it prompted us to think about what we should be doing to help taxpayers in the next 50 years.

That's why, last March, we introduced our Cornerstone project focused on state policymaking. Despite the wide-ranging effects of federal policymaking, state laws regarding regulation and taxation impact taxpayers' lives still more, often making it harder to earn a living or own a business. Therefore, Cornerstone is taking all of NTU's federal-level experience and know-how and bringing it directly to the states. We are putting NTU experts in the field, working from regional offices strategically placed around the country to more easily fight bad tax policies. We're proud to be the taxpayers' lobbyist in Washington. Now, we'll be their lobbyist in state capitals across the country, too.

Of course, even with this exciting new initiative, our 50th anniversary would not have been complete without a celebration to mark the occasion. On October 23, we brought together over 300 of our partners and allies for an unforgettable anniversary gala. We presented House Republican Whip Steve Scalise with the Happy Warrior for Taxpayer Freedom Award. His deeply moving remarks about how tax reform helped small businesses in his district reminded those of us in the audience why we fight for taxpayers. Larry Kudlow, President Trump's Economic Advisor, followed with a great speech defending the values of limited government and fiscal restraint. He encouraged us to empower the true strength of our nation: its ingenious and hardworking people. Kudlow and Master of Ceremonies Hugh Hewitt finished the evening programming with a fascinating discussion about how advocates for taxpayers can better turn their ideas into real policy.

Throughout the evening, the NTU and NTUF teams were continuously reminded that we could not have made it to such a momentous milestone without incredible supporters and friends. We're glad that several of you were able to join us for our gala, but more importantly, we're grateful for all the help you have given us over the years. Whether you're a new friend to NTU and NTUF, or have weathered the ups and downs of fiscal policy with us over many years, your contributions have been (and still are) so vital to our success. Most important of all, however, is your dedication to our shared vision of a better future for taxpayers.

Looking forward, I believe the single most important priority for NTU and NTUF in 2020 is to both broaden and deepen our capabilities to make a measurable difference for taxpayers, regardless of the future course of events. Thanks to you, we have made exciting progress, *but we must never become complacent*. Let us always keep moving forward!

Sincerely,



Pete Sepp
President, NTU and NTUF



Government Affairs

When the House changed hands at the beginning of the year, political pundits opined that an increase in partisan bickering and the number of proposals to massively increase government spending would make it impossible to get anything done. Fortunately, the NTU government affairs team proved these predictions to be only half right. Despite the odds, in 2019 we scored important victories for taxpayers at both the federal and state levels.

Federal affairs

Chief among the victories we achieved this year was the passage of the Taxpayer First Act. Although the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 was a significant step forward for taxpayers, its updates to the tax code exacerbated the need for corresponding reforms to our system of tax administration. By leading the lobbying effort among citizen groups to get the Taxpayer First Act to the President's desk, NTU succeeded in making sure that Congress addressed this problem.

Our work lobbying the White House bore fruit as well. In collaboration with a broad coalition of partners and allies, NTU was able to encourage the President to greatly increase accountability and transparency for one of the most opaque parts of federal policymaking. The "Improved Agency Guidance Documents" Executive Order and the "Transparency and Fairness" Executive Order, both signed in October, will allow American taxpayers to better understand and challenge guidelines released by government agencies.

As we were working towards these significant wins, our further efforts in Washington, D.C. built on NTU's 50 year track record as a leader on issues of critical importance to taxpayers. We advocated to reduce tax burdens across the board, promote free trade, expand consumer options in health care, and deregulate innovative sectors.

In April, Senior Fellow Mattie Duppler was invited to testify before the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security during a hearing titled, "Comprehensive Legislative Proposals to

Enhance Social Security." In her testimony, Ms. Duppler not only made the argument in opposition to policies that would substantially raise payroll taxes, but she added a unique and valuable perspective to the discussion. Ranking Member Congressman Tom Reed (R-NY) noted,

"But as we go into this conversation, I want to make sure that we go into it eyes wide open. And that is why I was so pleased to invite Ms. Duppler here as a representative of a voice that needs to be heard in this mission to protect Social Security, because she represents the future."



NTU's Mattie Duppler testified before the House Ways & Means Committee on April 10, 2019.

Although a divided House made comprehensive reform impossible, our team engaged in several issues on the health care front to move policy in a more free market direction. Congress' attempts to solve "surprise billing," when patients are stuck with exorbitant bills through no fault of their own, was one such issue. Our analysis and outreach not only helped Capitol Hill staffers better understand why the favored remedies (government price-setting and forced arbitration) are inadequate; we also offered a third, more market-oriented approach for fixing the problem. We also led the charge against Speaker Nancy Pelosi's abysmal prescription drug proposal, disseminating a detailed analysis of its most problematic provisions to the Hill the same day as its public release.

Financial services policy proved to be another fruitful issue area. In the spring, we led a coalition opposing a proposal to create a federally-operated real-time payments system for credit card purchases. That same month, we also organized a coalition letter arguing that the Federal Housing Finance Agency should minimize taxpayer risk by reforming credit scoring models. This letter was later mentioned during a hearing before the Senate Banking Committee.

NTU is thrilled to be at the forefront of so many legislative battles at the federal level. By offering pragmatic, free market solutions to the problems facing states and the nation, we have once again staked our claim as the nation's premier free market organization and the "Voice of America's Taxpayers."



NTU's Thomas Aiello and Andrew Lautz Presented Congressman Jeff Duncan with his Taxpayers' Friend Award.

State affairs

The biggest change to NTU's government affairs team in 2019 was the launch of our state Cornerstone plan. Despite the wide-ranging effects of federal policymaking, state laws often have an even greater impact on taxpayers. Cornerstone is putting NTU experts in the field, bringing all of our federal-level experience directly to state capitals. Former Wisconsin state senator and recent U.S. Senate candidate Leah Vukmir joined NTU as the leader of this initiative in March. She immediately hit the ground running, getting involved in detailed policy conversations on pharmaceutical policy, vaping taxes, and consumer product labeling.

Between her 16 years of experience as a lawmaker and her time as the national chairwoman of the American Legislative Exchange Council, Senator Vukmir knows what it takes to get the attention of state legislators. She has strong personal connections to hundreds of state lawmakers and government officials, which allows her and the rest of the NTU team to communicate our message directly to the right stakeholders. For instance, while fighting a

problematic health care bill in Tallahassee, she was able to access the floor of the Florida State Senate and speak face-to-face with the chairwoman of the relevant committee. Her impact in the states is unparalleled in the free market community.

As if this weren't impressive enough, our efforts received a boost when Scott Walker, two-term governor of Wisconsin, joined NTU as a senior advisor. We supported and admired many of Governor Walker's fiscal policy achievements during his tenure as governor—he promised fiscal responsibility to taxpayers and, unlike most politicians, delivered on that promise. That alone made him a natural fit for team taxpayer, and his experience and expertise have been a boon to our state operations.

NTU experts were invited to give testimony in several states over the course of the year, providing great opportunities to get our pro-taxpayer message to a larger legislator audience. Senator Vukmir provided testimony to her former colleagues in Madison in support of a bill that would require a referendum before politicians could enact a higher "wheel tax," thereby giving Wisconsin taxpayers a louder voice. Policy and Government Affairs Associate Thomas Aiello testified twice at the state level. In Austin, Texas he supported a telecommunications right-of-way bill that was ultimately enacted into law, and will save taxpayers \$900 million over ten years. He also traveled to Lincoln, Nebraska to testify against legislation that would raise the sales tax rate and target e-cigarettes for higher taxes.

All told, in 2019 we were able to directly weigh in on public policy in 28 states. In 2020, we look forward to building out our state team and increasing our influence so that we can have a bigger impact in even more states.



NTU's Pete Sepp speaking at NTU's policy briefing titled "Credit Scores and Housing Finance: How to Minimize Risk at the GSEs and Protect Taxpayers."



Foundation

In 2019, the NTUF team made major inroads on our three core policy projects and significantly expanded our tax and budget work, more firmly establishing ourselves as the organization leading the charge for smarter policy at both the federal and state level.

Taxpayers' Budget Office

2019 was a crucial year in the development of the Taxpayers' Budget Office (TBO), NTUF's project to reform and hold accountable the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). We published studies on topics ranging from inaccuracies built into CBO's budget projections, to the details of the agency's budget request to Congress, to cynical ploys to game CBO's baseline in order to facilitate huge spending increases. We also aggressively pushed the agency to be more transparent in its analysis. CBO responded positively to this pressure, producing unprecedented research on its own errors and subjecting its operations more fully to Congressional oversight in accountability hearings.

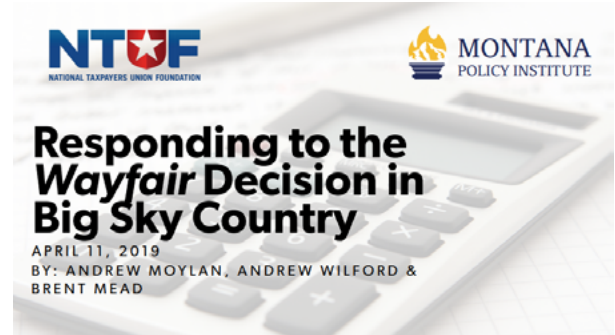
Our focus on building better relationships with Congressional offices and with CBO itself facilitated our success. For example, we identified an odd scoring disparity that led CBO to produce a \$12.6 trillion score for a bill that would simply extend funding at current levels if appropriations lapsed. We met with the sponsor of the bill, Senator James Lankford (R-OK), and conversed directly with CBO about the anomaly that led to the bizarre score. As a result, Lankford's office worked to produce modified legislation intended to help CBO produce an analysis more reflective of reality. Additionally, we met directly with the agency's new head, Phillip Swagel, on multiple occasions throughout the year. One such meeting led him to invite our team in to discuss a wide range of reform ideas TBO had identified with his top staff and to solicit our input for their CBO's "Budget Options" report.

Interstate Commerce Initiative

As we anticipated, the Supreme Court's decision in the 2018 *South Dakota v. Wayfair* case set off a flurry of aggressive actions by states attempting to seize their newfound tax power and levy taxes on individuals and businesses outside their borders. NTUF's

Interstate Commerce Initiative (ICI) quickly jumped into action to turn back the rising tide of unbridled state power.

One of our strategies was to launch productive joint projects with state-based think tanks. Our collaboration with the Montana Policy Institute was successful in convincing legislators not to impose a statewide sales tax for the first time in Montana's history. In Louisiana, we worked with the Pelican Institute to highlight the clear unconstitutionality of a collection scheme. The state eventually postponed it, rather than put itself in legal risk. Together with the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, we identified the risk of imposing burdensome paperwork on wholesale businesses, prompting Michigan legislators to write an exemption into the state's law. Finally, ICI also produced landmark research that identified huge revenue shortfalls in states that were counting on post-*Wayfair* laws to raise billions in new sales tax revenue.



NTUF partnered with the Montana Policy Institute to discuss how Montana has responded to the Wayfair decision.

NTUF's team was also busy working directly with legislators and policy influencers at both the federal and state level. To highlight just a few engagements (among many), Executive Vice President Andrew Moylan was asked to present ICI's paper on revenue shortfalls to state legislators at the American Legislative Exchange Council Annual Meeting, to speak directly with the heads of state taxpayer groups across the country through the National Taxpayers Conference, and to testify in Michigan on the aforementioned NTUF and Mackinac Center paper.

Free Trade Initiative

In a policy world that is often hostile to trade issues, NTUF's Free Trade Initiative (FTI) is a strong voice proclaiming the virtues of free and vibrant international trade. Through research, lawmaker outreach, and coalition organizing, in 2019 FTI provided crucial support for trade at a perilous moment.



NTUF's Bryan Riley testified before The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) on proposed Section 301 Tariffs.

FTI's research touched on a diverse array of trade topics, including the legal status of trade agreements, the risk of stealth tax hikes tucked into treaties, and the staggering total cost of tariffs on imports. We tallied the total cost of tariffs imposed in trade negotiations, finding that they racked up more than \$54 billion in tax increases in one year alone. This staggering figure makes the trade war one of the most expensive tax hikes in history, even eclipsing the 2010 Affordable Care Act in total costs to taxpayers.

When news reports suggested that the President planned to launch a campaign in favor of a bill that would grant him the authority to impose so-called "reciprocal" tariffs, FTI produced key research highlighting and educated Members of Congress about the flaws of such an approach. Our pushback helped temper support for the concept, halting its advance.

On top of our research and outreach efforts, FTI played an important role in organizing and harnessing the power of other policy organizations in defense of free trade. Our "Free Trade Working Group," a coalition of like-minded allies from other policy organizations, met regularly over the course of the year, strategically planning how to best approach and combat some of the most harmful contemporary trade policies.

Tax Policy

NTUF started off 2019 strong, significantly expanding its tax policy work during tax season. After early IRS data raised questions about the size of the average tax refund, we produced an analysis showing that the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) was not, in fact, causing refund size to drop, as some commentators had concluded. We also issued our annual tax complexity report, which calculated that taxpayers spent more than 8 billion hours and nearly \$365 billion complying with the tax code. Surprisingly, thanks to simplifications in TCJA, the burden for individual income tax filers actually decreased 71 million hours from the previous year. On the flip side, however, the time businesses had to invest rose by 117 million hours.

NTUF also played a leading role in analyzing tax plans from presidential candidates, including new wealth tax schemes, "robot tax" proposals, Social Security tax hikes, so-called "Medicare for All" financing plans, and "mark-to-market" taxation of financial holdings. We also tallied the staggering cost of the agenda of Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), who by her own admission, sought more than \$26 trillion in tax hikes.



NTUF's Executive Vice President Andrew Moylan presenting our Wayfair research to the American Legislative Exchange Council's Tax Task Force

In the fall, our hire of veteran tax policy expert Nicole Kaeding as Vice President of Policy Promotion and Economist bolstered our tax policy analysis capabilities still further. We produced more deep-dive analyses of important, but underserved, tax policy issues including TCJA's treatment of research and development costs and the structure of the so-called "GILTI" provision regulating taxation of international income. NTUF was also one of the first groups to produce detailed commentary about the threat a "mark-to-market" plan poses.



Communications

Spurred by the launch of initiatives such as the state Cornerstone project and the addition of new policy experts, NTU and NTUF experienced a significant increase in content production during 2019. Our communication efforts kept pace with this growth, getting our research, analysis, and advocacy in front of new and larger audiences.

To begin with, we overhauled the format and branding of our issue briefs and policy papers, even developing sub-branding for three of our major projects. The changes to products from NTU, NTUF, our Interstate Commerce Initiative, the Taxpayers' Budget Office, and our Free Trade initiative better display our incisive commentary and research, making them more accessible. The new formatting also has the appropriate look and feel to match our long history and policymaking bona fides, bringing our products new gravitas and influence with policymakers and media. During the process of these redesigns, we also doubled our capacity for production. NTU and NTUF published more than 60 issue briefs and policy papers in 2019, compared with 32 in 2018.

Along with greatly expanding our research and analysis publication capacity, the NTU and NTUF teams wrote, edited, and placed even more op-eds in 2019 than we had the previous year-- more than 120 in prominent publications across the country, easily outpacing a 2018 tally that was closer to 100 placements. We appeared in major national outlets like *Time Magazine*, *USA Today*, and *The Hill*; in leading state publications such as the *Austin American Statesman*, the *Sacramento Bee*, the *Colorado Springs Gazette*, and the *Toledo Blade*; and in policy-focused publications like *Government Executive*, *Real Clear Markets* and *Payments Source*, among others.



NTU Senior Fellow Mattie Duppler on CNBC's *The Exchange* on March 1, 2019.

NTU and NTUF's media presences also increased thanks to the addition of high-profile staff, including Governor Scott Walker, state Senator Leah Vukmir, and economist Nicole Kaeding. Print and online publications, including *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *Politico*, *Forbes*, *Bloomberg*, and more, regularly quoted members of our teams.

Our experts appeared on major broadcast programs on TV, radio, and streaming platforms over 200 times. Many of these appearances were on some of the biggest and most influential shows airing today: Tucker Carlson Tonight, Squawk Box, Fox & Friends, Mornings With Maria, SiriusXM Radio, and others. Our message reached millions of viewers and listeners through these broadcast appearances.



NTU President Pete Sepp on C-Span on April 15, 2019.

Overall, 2019 was a banner year for getting NTU and NTUF's pro-taxpayer message in front of an ever growing audience. We pushed our writing, editing, and publishing capacities to higher levels than ever before, but we're not close to finished. In 2020, we're looking forward to a year of still more growth, and an even larger increase in capacity for our communications.

Media Highlights

The Washington Post

"White House mulls Rick Scott's idea to cut taxes by amount raised in tariffs through U.S.-China trade war"
Nicole Kaeding, Quoted



"Voters should defend their TABOR refunds"
Op-ed by Thomas Aiello



"The potential impact of a hike in tariffs on US consumers"
TV Interview with Mattie Duppler

The Columbus Dispatch

"NO: Propping up plants costly to taxpayers, alternative power"
Op-ed by Leah Vukmir

Government Executive

"The Budget Outlook Is Even Worse Than the Official Projections"
Op-ed by Demian Brady

Townhall

"Republicans Stepping Up to Counter Dems on 'Medicare For All'"
Op-ed by Andrew Lautz



"Trump signs order to make American-made goods more American"
Bryan Riley, Quoted



"Tax this but not that at Halloween, depending on where you live -- There is a lesson here"
Op-ed by Nicole Kaeding



"Elizabeth Warren's Latest Bad Idea"
Op-ed by Andrew Wilford



Mattie Duppler,
Radio Interview



"No, Rich Americans Don't Pay Lower Tax Rates Than Poor Americans Do"
Op-ed by Andrew Wilford



"Dems Key 2020 Issue: Medicare for All"
TV Interview with Mattie Duppler



"State budget planners will count on phantom revenue streams this year"
Op-ed by Andrew Wilford



"Why Congress Just Can't Kill 'Zombie' Tax Breaks"
Nicole Kaeding, Quoted



"Conservatives Fight Trump on Trade
When Congress Won't"
Podcast with Bryan Riley

Austin American-Statesman

"Sales tax 'safe harbor' is not too
big. If anything, it's too small."
Op-ed by Andrew Wilford



"Bump in Tax
Refunds"
TV Interview with
Mattie Duppler



The New York Times

"Warren Health Plan Tightens Democrats'
Embrace of Tax Increases"
Nicole Kaeding, Quoted

ARIZONA CAPITOL TIMES
azcapitoltimes.com

"U.S. Supreme Court should stop
California's cash grab"
Op-ed by Andrew Moylan & Andrew
Wilford

Bloomberg

"Warren Brushes Off Skeptics With
Medicare for All Pay-Fors"
Nicole Kaeding, Quoted

"Why middle-class
Americans should
worry about a wealth
tax"
TV Interview with
Brandon Arnold



"Elizabeth Warren Is Wrong
about the Housing Market"
Op-ed by Andrew Wilford

TIME

Americans Deserve Better Than
Speaker Nancy Pelosi's Drug Pricing
Plan"
Op-ed by Scott Walker



"Whistleblower
Protection Act Has
Earned Bipartisan
Support In The Last
30 Years"
Radio Interview with
Pete Sepp



"Government Data Transparency Is
Necessary to Prevent Next Housing
Crash"
Op-ed by Thomas Aiello



"IRS and Congress Waging Misguided
War on Environmental Tax
Deduction"
Op-ed by Pete Sepp



"Democrats' anti-Trump tax cut talking
point just collapsed — tax refunds are up
this year"
Op-ed by Andrew Wilford



"Trump's 'Emergency Powers' Could
Initiate a Dirty Energy Bailout"
Op-ed by Brandon Arnold



"How the State of the
Union Could Affect
Your Taxes"
TV Interview with
Mattie Duppler
(Cheddar TV)



"Don't let politicians ruin
cheap air travel"
Op-ed by Pete Sepp

The Washington Times

The National Taxpayers Union marks its 50th anniversary

Originally printed on October 24, 2019.
Scott Walker



Washington hosted a big celebration on Wednesday. No, I am not talking about the World Series — the Nationals don't play at home until Friday night. The National Taxpayers Union (NTU) celebrated its 50th anniversary this week.

In 1969, a 22-year-old former Nixon campaign volunteer by the name of James Dale Davidson founded the group because he believed the taxpayers needed a voice in Washington, D.C., and the establishment had not given them one. Ever since then, the NTU has been the taxpayers' lobbyist in our federal, state and local governments.

The San Francisco Chronicle called the National Taxpayers Union "the granddaddy" of the tax-

payer movement. In 1988, Washington Monthly called NTU one of the "Best Public Interest Groups" in our nation's capital because of its effectiveness fighting for fiscal responsibility.

NTU led the charge for a Balanced Budget Amendment during the 1970s and 1980s. They got it passed in the Senate in 1982, then in the House in 1995. As frequent readers of this column know, passing a Balanced Budget Amendment is a passion of mine with the national debt approaching \$30 trillion by 2025.

The National Taxpayers Union fought against waste in the federal government in several ways:

They led a coalition that helped enact legislation creating the modern Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process to eliminate unnecessary military facilities.



- They exposed lavish pensions for federal employees and members of Congress then worked to pass the Federal Employees' Retirement Act.

- They have published a scorecard on fiscal policy for members of Congress for more than 30 years.

- They got a Taxpayer Bill of Rights passed as part of the Technical and Miscellaneous Revenue Act and another one passed to help taxpayers deal with the system.

- They helped overhaul the Internal Revenue Service.

- They helped create a Tea Bag Revolution to fight a 51 percent pay increase for Congress.

- They worked on a number of taxpayer-friendly initiatives over the years at the state level — including Proposition 13 in California.

Since the National Taxpayers Union was founded, the top income tax rate has fallen from 77 percent to 37 percent. The lowest rate fell from 14 percent to 10 percent.

President Ronald Reagan commemorated NTU's work at their 15-year anniversary, writing that NTU's "support for across-the-board tax rate reduction and income tax indexing helped pave the way for congressional adoption of these important reforms." The tax cuts passed during the Reagan presidency helped spur an economic recovery which lasted long after he left office.

NTU has lobbied successfully on all major tax legislation during its history, including the Reagan tax cuts (the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 and the Tax Reform Act of 1986), the Bush tax cuts (the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001, and the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003), to the Trump tax cuts (Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017.)

In addition to fighting for lower tax cuts and against tax increases, NTU continues to push for reforms that save taxpayers money through overall policy. NTU also has an aggressive plan — called the Cornerstone Project — to more aggressively fight for the taxpayers at the state and local level.

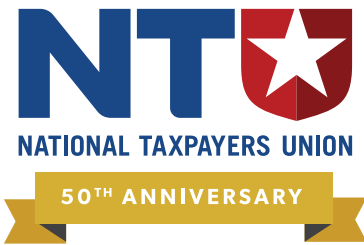
The National Taxpayers Union will continue to be the leading advocate for the hard-working taxpayers of America in our nation's capital, but they are broadening their reach in statehouses across the country. Now, more than ever, taxpayers need a voice in our state capitals.

I am proud of our record in Wisconsin. The overall tax burden on the people of my state has gone down by more than \$13 billion since 2011. Property and income taxes are lower than before I took office as governor and, with the help of the state legislature, we actually eliminated the state property tax. During the decade before we took office, property taxes had gone up by 27 percent. Our dramatic tax relief over the past eight years played a key role in our unemployment rate going from 9.3 percent in 2010 to below the historic low of 3 percent over the past several years.

My neighbor Illinois is a good example of a state going in the opposite direction — particularly this year. According to one source, some 20 tax increases and fees total \$4.6 billion worth of new costs to Illinois taxpayers starting in 2019. Over the past few years, the Land of Lincoln has seen the largest exodus in the population of any state in America. Coincidence? I don't think so.

All the more reason we need an aggressive advocate for the taxpayers — in the states as well as in our nation's capital. With the National Taxpayers Union now celebrating a half-century of existence, we need them to be even more active — at all levels — during the next 50 years ago and beyond.

50th Anniversary





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