

# **Durbin, Duckworth press Rauner to weigh in on tax plans**

November 17 2017 1:10 PM

WASHINGTON—U.S. Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) today urged Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner to publically weigh-in on the Republican tax plans in the House and Senate and how these plans would impact Illinois families. Both the House and Senate bills would finance massive tax cuts for the largest corporations and wealthiest Americans by raising taxes on millions of middle-income families and eliminating vital tax breaks for people in Illinois.



“Given how quickly Republicans are attempting to ram their dangerous tax plans through the House of Representatives and the Senate and the serious threat these plans pose to the people of Illinois, we urge you to publicly announce your position on the Republican tax plans immediately,” Durbin and Duckworth wrote in a letter to Gov. Rauner.

Both plans take aim at the SALT deduction, with the Senate plan eliminating it completely and the House plan gutting the deduction. As the state with the fifth highest number of taxpayers who claim this deduction, Republican efforts to eliminate or gut SALT would hit Illinois especially hard. The roughly one-third of all taxpayers in Illinois who benefit from SALT would be subjected to double-taxation under the Republican plans and state and local governments would find it more difficult to fund essential local education programs, infrastructure projects, and social services.

Further, recently released changes to the Senate bill reveal that to fund tax cuts for corporations and the wealthiest one percent, Senate Republicans plan to eliminate one of the three core pillars of the Affordable Care Act. As a result, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that 13 million Americans—including many in our state—will lose their health insurance and individual market premiums will increase by at least 10 percent.

Additionally, the House bill would eliminate the medical expense deduction, making it so that the more than 370,000 Illinois who depend on this deduction would no longer be able to claim an average \$10,000 deduction to help offset costly out-of-pocket medical expenses. The House bill also takes aim at students in our state by eliminating the student loan interest deduction, preventing the more than 1.5 million Illinoisans who collectively hold \$51 billion in federal student loan debt from deducting the interest gain on their loans.

Lastly, both Republican proposals would add \$1.5 trillion to our nation's deficit, which will undoubtedly be used in the future by Republican leaders to justify drastic cuts to federal spending on public assistance programs.

Last month, Durbin and Duckworth sent Gov. Rauner a [letter](#) outlining their concerns with one of the central components of the Republican tax plans, the elimination of the state and local tax deduction, and requested his feedback on how eliminating the deduction would impact Illinois families and Illinois' economy. That letter has gone unanswered.

Full text of the letter to Gov. Rauner is available below:

November 16, 2017

The Honorable Bruce Rauner

Governor of the State of Illinois

207 State House

Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor Rauner:

Congressional Republicans are using the partisan process of reconciliation to quickly pass tax bills in the House of Representatives and the Senate that would have a devastating impact on families across Illinois.

Last month, we sent you a letter outlining our concerns with one of the central components of the Republican tax plans, the creation of an unprecedented double taxation system where hardworking Illinoisans would have their income taxed twice—once at the state and local level and again at the Federal level. We requested your feedback on how eliminating the long-standing state and local tax (SALT) deduction would impact Illinois families and our state's economy.

Our letter went unanswered. We write once again to solicit your feedback on how the Republican tax plans in the House and Senate would impact Illinois and believe the residents of Illinois deserve to hear from their Governor on how each proposal would impact our state.

Both the House and Senate bills would finance massive tax cuts for the largest corporations and wealthiest Americans by raising taxes on millions of middle-income families and eliminating vital tax breaks for people in our state. Both plans take aim at the SALT deduction, with the Senate plan eliminating it completely and the House plan gutting the deduction. As the state with the fifth highest number of taxpayers who claim this deduction, Republican efforts to eliminate or gut SALT would hit Illinois especially hard. The roughly one-third of all taxpayers in Illinois who benefit from SALT would be subjected to double-taxation under the Republican plans and state and local governments would find it more difficult to fund essential local education programs, infrastructure projects, and social services.

Further, recently released changes to the Senate bill reveal that to fund tax cuts for corporations and the wealthiest one percent, Senate Republicans plan to eliminate one of the three core pillars of the Affordable Care Act. As a result, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that 13 million Americans—including many in our state—will lose their health insurance and individual market premiums will increase by at least 10 percent. Additionally, the House bill that is expected to be voted on today would eliminate the medical expense deduction, making it so that the more than 370,000 Illinois who depend on this deduction would no longer be able to claim an average \$10,000 deduction to help offset costly out-of-pocket medical expenses. The House bill

also takes aim at students in our state by eliminating the student loan interest deduction, preventing the more than 1.5 million Illinoisans who collectively hold \$51 billion in federal student loan debt from deducting the interest gain on their loans.

Lastly, both Republican proposals would add \$1.5 trillion to our nation's deficit, which will undoubtedly be used in the future by Republican leaders to justify drastic cuts to federal spending on public assistance programs. You are acutely aware of the budgetary challenges facing our state and can understand the harm that would result from steep cuts in federal funding for programs vital to people across Illinois.

Given how quickly Republicans are attempting to ram their dangerous tax plans through the House of Representatives and the Senate and the serious threat these plans pose to the people of Illinois, we urge you to publicly announce your position on the Republican tax plans immediately. Thank you in advance for your consideration and prompt reply.

Sincerely,