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# The Debate over Tax Cuts: It's Not Just About the Rich Tax Breaks for 13 Million Working Families with 26 Million Children Are Also at Stake

State-by-state analysis of the tax breaks for working families with children that President Obama would keep and the GOP would eliminate.

Much has been written about the fight between President Obama and congressional Republicans over whether to extend the Bush tax cuts for the best-off two percent of Americans. But there is an equally stark difference between the two parties when it comes to taxes on low- and moderate-income working families.

While the GOP plan would extend tax cuts for 2.7 million high earners, it would allow the expiration of tax breaks for 13 million working families with 26 million children.

President Obama proposes to do just the opposite. He would let the Bush tax breaks for the highest earners expire, but extend important tax breaks for working families with children, which were enacted in 2009 and later extended through 2012.

One of the 2009 provisions makes families earning more than \$3,000 eligible for the child tax credit. Under the GOP proposal, this provision would expire and, starting in 2013, only families earning more than \$13,300 would be eligible for any child tax credit.<sup>1</sup>

The other 2009 provisions expand the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) in two ways. First, they provide a larger EITC for families with 3 or more children.<sup>2</sup> Second, they reduce the "marriage penalty" in the EITC by starting the phase-out of the EITC at a higher level for married couples.<sup>3</sup> The GOP proposal would allow both of these expansions of the EITC to expire.

### In 2013:

- Obama's child credit provision would save 8.9 million working families, with 16.4 million eligible children, a total of \$7.6 billion. That's an average of \$854 per family.
- Obama's EITC provisions would save 6.5 million working families, with 15.9 million children, a total of \$3.4 billion, an average of \$530 per family.
- In combination, these provisions would save 13.1 million working families, with 25.7 million children, a total of \$11.1 billion, an average of \$843 per family.<sup>4</sup>
- Virtually all of these tax breaks would go to families earning less than \$50,000. Only families with wages or other earned income would be eligible.

State-by-state tables showing the 2013 effects of the tax breaks for working families that President Obama wants to extend and the GOP wants to scrap are attached.

#### **Notes**

- 1. The tax cuts enacted under President George W. Bush included provisions that doubled the maximum child tax credit (CTC) from \$500 to \$1,000 and made it partially refundable. Like the EITC, the refundable part of the CTC was calculated as a percentage of earnings, in order to encourage work, but unlike the EITC, the refundable part of the CTC was calculated as a percentage of earnings over a certain threshold rather than starting with the first dollar earned. The refundable part of the CTC is equal to 15 percent of earnings in excess of the threshold, and the total credit (including the regular credit and the refundable part of the credit) cannot exceed \$1,000 per child. Congressional Republicans propose to extend only the Bush-era provisions (and not the 2009 provisions) into next year so that the earnings threshold would be \$13,300 in 2013. President Obama proposes to also extend into 2013 the provision of the 2009 economic recovery act that reduced the threshold to \$3,000.
- 2. The EITC is calculated as a percentage of earnings, up to certain limits. The permanent rules set the percentage at 7.65% for childless taxpayers, 34% for families with one child, and 40% for families with two or more children. The 2009 economic recovery act increased the EITC rate to 45% for families with three or more children.
- 3. The EITC is phased out gradually for taxpayers starting at a certain income level. Before the Bush tax cuts were enacted, the phase-out starting point for the EITC was the same for married taxpayers and unmarried taxpayers, and this was perceived as creating a bias against marriage because two single adults who each had one child might decide that it was against their financial interest to get married because their combined EITCs would be greater if they remained unmarried. One provision that was part of the Bush tax cuts reduced this "marriage penalty" by making the phase-out starting point for married couples \$3,000 greater than the phase-out starting point for unmarried taxpayers. The 2009 economic recovery act further reduced the marriage penalty by increasing the phase-out starting point for married couples by another \$2,000. (Both of these amounts are indexed for inflation.)
- 4. The total number of families and children affected by the CTC expansion and the EITC expansion is less than the sum of the number affected by each of them because 18 percent of families that benefit would benefit from both. The overlap between the two credit expansions is limited because the expanded child credit is targeted to families making less than \$25,000, while the expanded EITC is targeted to families making \$20-50,000.

## Combined Effects in 2013 of Extending the 2009 Rules for the EITC and the Per-Child Tax Credit

# of families # of kids in Total benefits Ave. benefit helped these families\* \$-million per family **US Totals** 13,115,146 25,715,652 \$ 11,056.7 \$ 843 287,044 838 Alabama 512,996 240.4 Alaska 20,710 42,274 16.3 788 709,091 275.8 903 Arizona 305,417 837 Arkansas 156,164 297,695 130.7 875 California 1,524,618 3,165,250 1,334.2 Colorado 190,845 344,865 133.6 700 75,033 147,285 53.4 712 Connecticut 869 Delaware 31,954 52,384 27.8 12.9 757 Dist. of Col. 17,035 37,907 Florida 977,480 1,718,069 775.4 793 Georgia 587,100 1,139,543 523.2 891 Hawaii 52,371 102,592 44.3 846 Idaho 58.3 791 73,774 150,347 Illinois 467,109 992,167 419.3 898 Indiana 268,296 211.5 788 525,069 Iowa 86,321 190,553 62.5 724 Kansas 98,227 201,089 80.2 817 Kentucky 183,209 332,944 148.3 810 203.9 231,482 405,915 881 Louisiana 21.5 Maine 35,042 64,730 613 Maryland 154,285 306,142 135.3 877 Massachusetts 165,143 299,374 113.5 687 428,298 325.8 Michigan 770,922 761 Minnesota 115,656 271,368 93.9 812 798 233,824 399,191 186.7 Mississippi 207.4 808 Missouri 256,829 480,545 Montana 39,239 68,801 25.3 646 Nebraska 62,532 119,840 43.7 698 Nevada 113,535 246,673 115.4 1,017 New Hampshire 22,301 36,092 15.6 699 218,863 442,175 201.0 918 New Jersey 770 New Mexico 115,222 214,788 88.88 New York 724,949 1,414,333 600.7 829 North Carolina 522,645 1,114,261 467.4 894 North Dakota 19,809 35,579 13.9 700 Ohio 498,603 997,137 436.7 876 Oklahoma 207,145 383,857 845 175.0 Oregon 133,792 258,389 102.4 766 387,740 773,274 318.9 822 Pennsylvania Rhode Island 30,284 58,252 29.1 962 South Carolina 262,996 501,775 232.8 885 South Dakota 29,034 60,425 26.2 904 811 330,797 594,954 268.2 Tennessee 906 Texas 1,463,192 2,952,035 1,325.4 Utah 120,838 114.0 943 288,122 Vermont 16,682 29,348 11.6 696 Virginia 275,089 493,667 202.4 736 Washington 246,432 492,169 198.5 806 719 West Virginia 77,050 128,835 55.4 Wisconsin 155,112 319,798 139.2 898 Wyoming 17,998 30,763 12.9 714

Source: ITEP Tax Model, July 2012 Citizens for Tax Justice, July 2012

<sup>\*</sup>Includes kids of all ages in families helped (unlike the table for the per-child credit, which includes only kids age 16 or less).

## **Effects of Maintaining the \$3,000 Earnings Threshold for the Per-Child Tax Credit**

Effects in 2013

	\$13,300 Earnings Threshold			\$3,000 Earnings Threshold			\$3,000 Threshold vs \$13,300 Threshold					
State	# of families with credit	# of kids with credit	Total credit (\$-mill)	# of families with credit	# of kids with credit	Total credit (\$-mill)	# of families who benefit	# of kids who benefit	Extra dollars (\$-mill)	Added # of families with any credit		
US Totals	33,116,975	57,511,837	\$ 48,698.6	36,826,342	63,336,773	\$ 56,312.6	8,913,360	16,435,981	\$ +7,614.0	+3,709,368	+5,824,936	
Alabama	587,191	935,135	773.5	662,088	1,038,534	958.7	200,122	325,769	+185.2	+74,898	+103,399	
Alaska	76,037	156,554	137.9	84,073	170,660	147.7	13,861	30,420	+9.8	+8,037	+14,106	
Arizona	690,913	1,270,025	1,086.9	767,503	1,403,539	1,253.2	195,301	392,164	+166.3	+76,590	+133,514	
Arkansas	332,965	536,731	459.0	372,914	605,260	547.1	96,219	180,438	+88.0	+39,949	+68,529	
California	3,801,946	6,913,670	5,818.6	4,221,192	7,604,109	6,702.6	1,069,276	2,094,675	+884.0	+419,246	+690,439	
Colorado	536,912	931,867	809.6	593,956	1,031,295	899.6	117,067	207,935	+90.0	+57,044	+99,427	
Connecticut	336,020	548,433	484.0	355,579	577,639	514.7	35,214	59,508	+30.7	+19,559	+29,205	
Delaware	90,530	146,774	124.8	104,074	164,819	148.4	25,267	40,741	+23.6	+13,544	+18,046	
Dist. of Col.	47,759	63,730	56.4	55,698	75,403	64.0	9,497	15,537	+7.6	+7,939	+11,673	
Florida	1,949,593	3,147,473	2,659.1	2,276,810	3,609,333	3,226.5	690,422	1,120,014	+567.4	+327,218	+461,860	
Georgia	1,147,576	1,981,223	1,581.4	1,308,779	2,233,672	1,953.4	401,718	769,049	+372.1	+161,203	+252,449	
Hawaii	143,717	254,326	214.3	159,867	272,744	244.1	36,067	68,217	+29.8	+16,150	+18,418	
Idaho	193,507	361,452	322.1	210,184	381,256	360.2	47,172	82,185	+38.1	+16,677	+19,804	
Illinois	1,346,452	2,408,192	2,050.5	1,473,170	2,609,600	2,343.2	320,318	621,767	+292.7	+126,718	+201,409	
Indiana	753,008	1,330,224	1,183.7	840,348	1,457,774	1,324.3	179,955	319,113	+140.6	+87,340	+127,550	
Iowa	307,365	590,973	527.2	324,868	619,152	559.2	46,628	110,838	+32.0	+17,503	+28,179	
Kansas	316,283	573,434	505.8	336,449	611,861	552.9	54,977	115,693	+47.1	+20,166	+38,427	
Kentucky	482,319	778,069	678.9	534,698	863,934	780.6	115,647	209,858	+101.7	+52,379	+85,865	
Louisiana	489,450	846,503	700.7	570,601	949,671	858.1	165,047	261,736	+157.5	+81,150	+103,168	
Maine	137,816	230,870	211.9	147,612	246,447	224.5	18,273	29,028	+12.7	+9,796	+15,576	
Maryland	580,557	968,361	826.7	646,200	1,095,570	931.8	117,826	229,941	+105.1	+65,643	+127,209	
Massachusetts	572,380	969,048	814.0	622,445	1,044,830	885.9	99,736	169,574	+71.9	+50,064	+75,783	
Michigan	1,042,286	1,795,685	1,551.1	1,173,141	2,018,124	1,783.4	300,402	508,917	+232.4	+130,855	+222,440	
Minnesota	587,318	1,060,236	933.6	621,304	1,134,685	992.5	76,678	185,164	+58.9	+33,986	+74,449	
Mississippi	387,359	630,630	507.8	457,467	714,097	652.3	184,899	266,874	+144.5	+70,108	+83,467	
Missouri	663,071	1,132,216	969.6	740,609	1,248,583	1,107.2	177,372	304,312	+137.6	+77,538	+116,367	
Montana	106,957	182,440	161.5	116,565	196,749	178.2	23,831	41,340	+16.7	+9,608	+14,310	
Nebraska	219,053	376,576	324.5	230,502	394,451	353.9	39,136	72,698	+29.4	+11,449	+17,874	
Nevada	310,038	588,325	495.5	335,725	622,643	575.6	83,171	179,687	+80.1	+25,688	+34,318	
New Hampshire	141,816	234,912	207.3	148,843	242,011	218.4	14,904	21,774	+11.0	+7,027	+7,099	
New Jersey		1,419,933	1,154.6		1,517,435	1,296.3	150,675	300,582	+141.7	+54,722	+97,502	
New Mexico	236,196	406,167	352.9	273,617	465,303	415.5	82,769	143,362	+62.6	+37,421	+59,135	
New York	1,817,409	3,072,966	2,516.8	2,036,506	3,428,563	2,939.7	526,178	951,147	+423.0	+219,097	+355,597	
North Carolina	1,127,924	1,853,628	1,574.7	1,272,624	2,135,761	1,886.4	346,390	715,147	+311.7	+144,700	+282,133	
North Dakota	67,422	127,860	112.6	71,572	132,561	121.4	10,418	17,443	+8.8	+4,150	+4,701	
Ohio	1,215,915		1,846.4	1,372,877	2,359,903	2,146.8	341,945	621,940	+300.4	+156,962	+238,072	
Oklahoma	425,886	737,605	626.2	487,427	828,487	743.6	132,339	248,464	+117.4	+61,541	+90,881	
Oregon	416,966	746,648	645.9	442,471	780,949	710.6	85,832	159,167	+64.7	+25,505	+34,301	
Pennsylvania	1,237,166		1,839.1	1,337,159	2,294,826	2,048.7	246,934	414,732	+209.6	+99,993	+140,249	
Rhode Island	103,475	174,905	146.6	112,578	187,992	167.3	24,690	45,014	+20.7	+9,103	+13,087	
South Carolina	533,204	856,343	722.0	624,116	1,014,824	896.1	192,569	345,383	+174.0	+90,912	+158,481	
South Dakota	92,933	174,415	153.5	99,109	182,798	170.1	21,558	41,185	+16.6	+6,176	+8,384	
Tennessee	726,504	1,152,367	985.0	811,212	1,274,296	1,168.4	209,948	358,742	+183.4	+84,708	+121,929	
Texas	3,045,402		4,424.3	3,424,717	6,011,582	5,337.8	989,927	1,914,141	+913.5	+379,315	+607,866	
Utah	340,642	762,063	658.6	371,564	812,275	727.6	76,116	179,454	+68.9	+30,922	+50,212	
Vermont	71,375	116,895	103.3	75,177	122,212	110.6	10,619	16,619	+7.3	+3,802	+5,317	
Virginia	852,501	1,437,285	1,204.1	907,023	1,514,529	1,346.9	179,123	319,229	+142.8	+54,521	+77,244	
Washington	739,323	1,335,040	1,149.9	793,013	1,407,594	1,280.9	145,539	272,985	+131.0	+53,690	+72,555	
West Virginia	183,738	289,504	248.2	207,777	326,165	287.6	53,705	86,144	+39.4	+24,039	+36,662	
Wisconsin	610,744	1,114,411	961.0	659,201	1,183,731	1,063.7	116,216	228,249	+102.7	+48,458	+69,320	
Wyoming	61,317	109,596	95.0	65,877	116,544	104.2	13,867	21,883	+9.3	+4,561	+6,948	

Source: ITEP Tax Model, July 2012 Citizens for Tax Justice, July 2012

## **Effects of Extending the 2009 EITC Expansion**

Effects in 2013

	EITO	C under GOF	plan	EITC with	Obama EITC	expansion	Changes from EITC expansion			
State	# of families with EITC	# of kids with EITC	Total credit (\$-mill)	# of families with EITC	# of kids with EITC	Total credit (\$-mill)	# of families with bigger EITC	# of kids with bigger EITC	Extra dollars (\$-mill)	
US Totals	19,405,381	30,932,806	\$ 53,095.5	19,984,948	32,430,511	\$ 56,538.3	6,498,711	15,925,647	\$ +3,442.7	
Alabama	474,080	697,224	1,315.6	483,112	721,812	1,370.8	117,164	257,818	+55.2	
Alaska	34,366	51,461	72.3	34,844	52,840	78.8	13,110	32,300	+6.5	
Arizona	421,178	797,527	1,141.0	438,859	850,805	1,250.5	182,004	526,716	+109.5	
Arkansas	255,249	387,858	704.7	256,460	389,366	747.3	81,494	180,661	+42.7	
California	2,136,327	3,706,940	5,818.6	2,211,095	3,903,982	6,268.8	790,157	2,095,974	+450.2	
Colorado	249,714	398,406	600.6	262,269	434,230	644.2	104,390	223,461	+43.6	
Connecticut	139,176	223,323	340.1	142,796	231,472	362.9	43,990	98,496	+22.7	
Delaware	57,547	85,481	147.1	58,904	88,661	151.3	9,005	17,970	+4.2	
Dist. of Col.	37,239	60,680	95.7	37,398	61,155	101.0	8,284	24,435	+5.3	
Florida	1,480,390	2,264,017	4,151.9	1,504,288	2,325,357	4,359.9	399,429	897,781	+208.1	
Georgia	898,692	1,378,137	2,559.1	910,268	1,414,015	2,710.3	300,815	725,163	+151.2	
Hawaii	70,567	114,698	183.3	72,983	120,845	197.8	26,121	65,947	+14.5	
Idaho	97,775	155,847	268.9	105,826	187,742	289.1	38,679	106,430	+20.2	
Illinois	699,533	1,162,790	1,888.3	726,178	1,234,678	2,014.9	226,540	615,611	+126.6	
Indiana	372,738	633,118	981.1	384,744	661,776	1,052.0	127,589	316,831	+70.9	
lowa	128,641	200,531	307.7	136,965	220,713	338.2	59,159	139,806	+30.5	
Kansas	144,018	249,678	373.9	145,150	253,750	407.0	61,695	141,820	+33.1	
Kentucky	286,636	431,015	777.6	294,676	446,316	824.2	100,072	215,938	+46.6	
Louisiana	414,587	619,074	1,269.9	421,692	637,710	1,316.3	89,429	206,798	+46.4	
Maine	61,702	85,436	1,209.9	65,112	94,873	1,310.3	18,387	40,252	+8.8	
Maryland	288,983	420,129	722.4	298,631	440,501	752.5	66,594	168,759	+30.2	
•	240,981		586.0	245,516	371,273	627.6	87,527	193,095	+30.2	
Massachusetts Michigan	542,337	359,007	1,465.4	569,826	922,230	1,558.9	195,198	426,754	+41.0	
Michigan Minnesoto	206,623	857,048	532.4	214,607	344,812	567.4	66,385	184,499	+35.0	
Minnesota Minnesota		311,196					-		+33.0	
Mississippi Missouri	352,427	527,288 572,442	1,010.1 987.7	358,229 381,938	547,614 587,546	1,052.2 1,057.6	72,483 124,568	193,726 298,437	+42.2	
Missouri Montana	375,457 57,122	83,517	145.6		84,519	1,057.0	19,854	38,572	+8.7	
Nebraska	84,984	135,932	215.8	57,849 88,492	142,026	230.0	30,184	59,630	+14.2	
	163,846		476.8	173,245	301,072	512.1	-	162,786	+35.4	
Nevada		274,957			•		58,784			
New Hampshire	49,090	65,068	117.9	49,512	66,334	122.4	9,175	19,501	+4.5	
New Jersey	387,200	581,830	998.7	398,583	606,005	1,058.0	113,670	282,621	+59.3	
New Mexico	171,881	268,951	462.8	175,619	279,704	489.0	51,451	128,088	+26.2	
New York	1,121,497	1,746,600	3,068.3	1,141,182	1,784,266	3,246.1	319,692	835,897	+177.8	
North Carolina	747,370	1,256,584	2,063.1	776,637	1,321,642	2,218.9	300,755	755,070	+155.7	
North Dakota	27,438	30,589	69.0	29,606	37,152	74.1	11,322	23,174	+5.1	
Ohio	671,088	1,054,921	1,884.8	704,879	1,152,443	2,021.1	257,664	646,864	+136.3	
Oklahoma	273,693	427,108	715.1	283,401	444,104	772.6	117,073	249,815	+57.6	
Oregon	186,038	297,714	489.2	196,463	317,956	526.9	72,795	160,051	+37.7	
Pennsylvania	592,727	905,131	1,549.0	617,242	957,390	1,658.2	206,424	509,533	+109.2	
Rhode Island	52,582	78,195	141.3	52,727	78,629	149.7	14,558	34,604	+8.5	
South Carolina	407,021	670,923	1,161.0	410,163	680,299	1,219.7	117,495	283,386	+58.7	
South Dakota	41,258	69,248	107.7	41,535	69,893	117.3	14,041	37,788	+9.7	
Tennessee	499,049	740,594	1,406.1	509,747	764,791	1,490.8	161,443	356,778	+84.8	
Texas	2,144,114	3,537,257	6,266.6	2,206,531	3,701,247	6,678.4	738,971	1,841,318	+411.9	
Utah	132,027	266,141	354.7	141,003	299,291	399.7	78,045	218,645	+45.0	
Vermont	28,006	41,772	67.7	29,719	46,858	72.0	7,635	16,102	+4.3	
Virginia	427,917	623,140	1,137.4	440,061	653,983	1,197.0	140,314	288,968	+59.6	
Washington	302,883	488,600	748.8	317,438	532,398	816.3	136,284	322,510	+67.5	
West Virginia	104,240	155,498	279.4	105,997	159,375	295.4	34,731	69,916	+16.0	
Wisconsin	240,218	345,023	638.4	249,556	365,005	674.9	69,543	172,405	+36.5	
Wyoming	25,129	37,164	70.7	25,393	38,054	74.3	6,539	16,146	+3.6	

Source: ITEP Tax Model, July 2012 Citizens for Tax Justice, July 2012