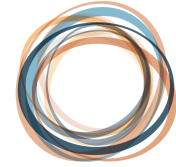


Taxes

Discussion Guide



THE POLICY
CIRCLE®

Let's Review

At the start of each discussion, review the conversation ground rules for returning and new members alike to set the stage for active participation by all. Use a timer as you go around the room. And don't forget to decide who will take notes and post a discussion recap.

- **Be open and curious:** Everyone brings a unique perspective. Listen first, focus on the facts, and stay curious.
- **Be respectful and engaged:** Ensure everyone has a chance to speak before adding a second comment. Support and encourage participation from all. Remember: What's said in the Circle stays in the Circle.
- **Be focused and concise:** Anchor the conversation to the issue and the Brief. Respect the timekeeper. *Use the "Table-It" Rule for off-topic ideas—note them and revisit them in a future session.*

Let's Begin

Each member is invited to answer the following questions in a two-minute reaction to the Brief:

- Introduce yourself, and share what "lens of care" did you wear when reviewing this brief (e.g. personal, professional, community, state, nation, global).
- What did you find most interesting or surprising from reading the Brief? What matters most?

Spread the Word: Facts to share during your discussion

- About half (49%) of federal government revenue comes from [individual income taxes](#); another 35% comes from payroll taxes that fund Social Security and Medicare.
- The top rate for individual income taxes has ranged from about [28% to 92%](#), while the top rate on corporate income has ranged from about [1% to 52.8%](#).
- In 2022, about 153.8 million taxpayers [reported](#) earning \$14.8 trillion in adjusted gross income and paid \$2.1 trillion in individual income taxes.

Let's Discuss

Below are questions for the group to consider and discuss. For more questions, read our **Conversation Sparks** or choose your own.

- Is our tax code overcomplicated? If so, how can it be simplified?
- Do you think tax revenues or spending restraint is more important in addressing the federal debt?
- Businesses file taxes differently than individuals; how does tax policy and compliance affect businesses?

Let's Act

1. **Take it local.** Identify how tax policies are affecting your community. Identify opportunities to work with other community members in your area.
2. **Explore the impact of tax policy in your community.** Search the National Council of State Legislature's [State Tax Actions Database](#) or for more general information, the [Internal Revenue Service](#). You can also search for tax policy in your state on [Ballotpedia](#).
3. **Investigate tax policies being debated** in your state or municipality. Attend local meetings to learn more about school bond proposals, millages, or other local taxes.
4. **Research your elected representatives' positions** on tax law, and their vision for how to tackle spending and revenue challenges facing Americans and your community. You can find contact information for federal, state, and local government officials [here](#). Your state or municipality's websites will also have information to contact leaders.
5. **Establish a relationship with your legislators.** It's easy to establish a relationship with your legislators. Start by introducing yourself. You can also learn to write to your representatives or set up a meeting with a legislator on [The Policy Circle website](#).
6. **Consider writing a letter to the editor or an op-ed** on your stance on the state of civic engagement in your local paper. Learn how on The Policy Circle [website](#).

Next Steps for Your Circle

- **Post a Recap:** Summarize your discussion to share thoughts with members not present and share planned actions from group members. Post a meeting recap in your Circle on [the Community](#) and fill out this [form](#).
- **Dive Deeper into the issues.** If this is an area you would like to pursue further, consider taking possible steps to take action. View the Conversation Sparks for more ideas.