

PROGRAMS AT RISK vs. TAX BREAKS FOR THE RICH

This is what “class war” looks like. The chart’s left side shows the “shared sacrifices” and “painful cuts” that the Republicans claim we must make to solve the federal budget crisis. The chart’s right side shows WHY these cuts are “necessary.” This chart originated at the Center for American Progress (www.americanprogress.org), specifically at www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/02/tax_breaks_infographic.html. The footnotes at the end of the website’s article provide source data.

Author Donna Cooper wrote this on February 22, 2011: “House leaders are unfortunately restricting their proposed budget cuts for the remainder of fiscal year 2011 to nonsecurity discretionary spending in an attempt to tame a \$1.3 trillion deficit. This approach is especially shortsighted since the Federal Treasury loses twice as much revenue due to tax breaks than Congress appropriates on all nonsecurity discretionary spending.

“The chart below compares the 10 safety-net programs slated for deep cuts with the cost of the tax breaks that should also be considered for reduction or elimination to bring the budget into balance. The column on the left is a list of safety-net programs that have already been targets of the House leadership’s budget ax. The column on the right is the cost to specified tax breaks.” Her article contains more information about tax breaks, which Congress fails to control.

PROGRAMS AT RISK	TAX BREAKS FOR THE WEALTHY
\$11.2 billion Early childhood programs	\$11.5 billion Per-year cost of recent tax cuts for millionaires’ estates
\$8.9 billion Low-income housing programs	\$8.9 billion Cost of allowing mortgage interest deduction for vacation homes (estimated 10-year cost)
\$7.6 billion Supplemental nutrition for per families (WIC)	\$6.7 billion Cost of “estate planning” techniques used by wealthy to avoid taxes
\$4.6 billion Teacher training and after-school programs	\$5.2 billion Cost of removing limit on itemized deductions for high-income taxpayers (fiscal year 2011)
\$4.1 billion Job training for unemployed and new workers	\$4.1 billion Cost of tax breaks for offshore operations of U.S. financial companies
\$2.5 billion Low-income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP) grants to poor families	\$2.5 billion Tax breaks for oil companies 9write-offs for drilling and oil well costs, fiscal year 2012)
\$2.5 billion Community health centers	\$4.9 billion Cost of extending alcohol fuel tax breaks
\$2.0 billion Homeless Assistance Grants	\$2.3 billion Tax loophole for managers of hedge funds and private equity funds (fiscal year 2012)
\$420 million Legal services for the poor	\$312 million Cost of allowing companies to write off punitive damages (10 years)
\$317 million Title X Family Planning	\$303 million Cost of special tax breaks for the timber industry
\$44 billion All programs at risk combined	\$42 billion One-year cost of extending Bush tax cuts for top brackets (FY 2012)

Tax breaks for the rich are not the only problem. While cutting funding to help people in need, the President and Congress keep wasting more money on wars and other military spending. Let’s “Bring Our Billion\$ Home.” Info: Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation (360) 491-9093 www.olympiafor.org and Western Washington Fellowship of Reconciliation (206) 789-5565 www.wvfor.org