

No tax policy surprises—and few new details—in 2024 Republican Party draft platform

A draft 2024 campaign platform released by the Republican National Committee (RNC) this week confirms some longstanding, high-level assumptions about where the party and Donald Trump, its presumptive presidential nominee, stand on tax policy, but offers little in the way of additional details. The platform document is expected to be ratified when the RNC holds its four-day nominating convention in Milwaukee, which kicks off on July 15.

URL: <https://cdn.nucleusfiles.com/be/beb1a388-1d88-4389-a67d-c1e2d7f8bedf/2024-gop-platform-july-7-final.pdf>

What's familiar

As expected, the draft platform, which was released on July 8, calls for a permanent extension of the tax cuts for individuals, estates, and passthrough entities that were enacted in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (TCJA, P.L. 115-97) and are scheduled to expire at the end of 2025, but it is silent on whether or not any portion of those tax cuts should be offset.

URL: <https://www.congress.gov/115/plaws/publ97/PLAW-115publ97.pdf>

Echoing comments that Trump made at a rally in Las Vegas last month, the draft platform also endorses “eliminating taxes on tips” for individuals working in the restaurant and hospitality industry; however, it does not address how such a proposal would work—for example, whether the exemption would apply only to federal income taxes or if it also would apply to employment taxes.

The document does not mention a proposal to reduce the corporate income tax rate that Trump floated in a meeting with congressional Republicans in Washington last month, although it does state—without elaborating—that the party would support “additional tax cuts” beyond the ones the RNC specifically cited.

It appears to endorse the former president’s call for a more stringent tariff regime, stating that the party “will support baseline tariffs on foreign-made goods,” but it makes no mention of Trump’s suggestion to GOP lawmakers last month that Congress should consider tariffs as a replacement for income taxes.

What's new

The draft platform expresses support for expanding tax-preferred section 529 education savings accounts and making them available for families that home school their children—longstanding GOP priorities that have not been a prominent part of Trump’s campaign but were addressed at a House Ways and Means Committee mark-up this week. (See separate coverage in this issue for additional details.)

It also makes passing references to two other proposed tax incentives that, to date, have not figured prominently in the former president’s campaign rhetoric: a new credit for first-time home buyers and a credit for family caregivers.

Democratic reaction

In a statement released July 8, Senate Finance Committee Chairman Ron Wyden, D-Ore., contended that the former president “wants to double down on his disastrous 2017 law, running up massive deficits to give enormous handouts to billionaires and wealthy corporations.”

Any TCJA provisions benefiting less affluent taxpayers “would be wiped out” by the tariffs Trump “wants to impose on nearly all the basic consumer goods people buy on a daily basis, including food, clothes, school supplies, you name it . . .,” Wyden said; moreover, he added, “the debt explosion his tax plan would cause would doom Social Security and trigger cuts in the very near future.”

President Biden and congressional Democrats have called for allowing the temporary TCJA tax cuts to expire for taxpayers with income above \$400,000 (\$450,000 in the case of married couples filing jointly) and remain in place for taxpayers whose income falls below that threshold. They also have called for offsetting the cost of any TCJA extensions with new taxes on large corporations and ultrawealthy individuals.

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