

December 2, 2013

Dear Tax Revision Commissioners,

Washington D.C. has long been a city of haves and have-nots. It's been getting worse, but right now, we have a chance to change that.

We are a group of District residents, some longtime and some more recent transplants, who earn (individually) over \$100,000 a year. For us, this city has been a place of incredible personal opportunity, and has offered us meaningful and rewarding careers. We love living here and benefit from many amenities like public transportation, bike lanes, parks and libraries.

For other residents, the District isn't a place of great opportunity but the reverse: a hard place to earn a living and one of the most expensive cities in America,[1] where one in three children lives in poverty.[2] As residents we greatly value D.C.'s diversity. Maintaining that diversity takes affordable housing, job training, and many other programs and services that make it possible for working families to make D.C. home. District residents' taxes pay for so many of the things that make D.C. the place we want to live. For all of us to flourish, those of us who are able need to pay our fair share. But right now, our city's tax structure is unbalanced. We are asking you to fix it.

D.C.'s tax structure puts the greatest burden on low and moderate income residents.[3] Those of us making the most money are paying a smaller share of our income in taxes than poor residents who are barely able to make ends meet. It simply doesn't make sense for people like us to pay a proportionately lower amount in taxes than our neighbors who are struggling. Our city needs everyone's help to make sure that working families can live and thrive here.

We're invested in the District's future. As high income earners, we ask you to make D.C.'s tax structures more fair by increasing our income taxes. We would be proud to pay higher taxes according to our means to get our city the resources it needs to make this a place of opportunity for all residents. It's simple common sense that we ought to give tax relief to residents who are struggling, and raise taxes progressively on those of us who can afford it. We're not just willing to pay more - we *should* pay more.

We urge you to do right. Fix our imbalanced tax structure and make it work for all D.C. residents. Thank you for your service, and we look forward to the commission's recommendations.

Sincerely,

[Names Removed for Online Publication]

[1] The Council for Community and Economic Research. (2013). *The Cost of Living Index, Quarter 3*. Retrieved from: www.coli.org/ReleaseHighlights.asp

[2] Kids Count Data Center. (2012). *Children in Poverty*. Retrieved from: datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/43-children-in-poverty

[3] Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. (2013). *Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All 50 States, Fourth Edition*. Retrieved from: www.itep.org/whopays