

Patriotic Millionaires

# Policy Brief

## The Prosperity for American Workers Act

*Requires big business to pay at least the “cost of living” for a single adult with no children or be taxed the difference.*

# The Goal:

**A rich, stable  
and free country.**

**An economy capable  
of sustaining it.**



**U.S. News** & WORLD REPORT

## **Stressed About Groceries? You're Not Alone**

Poll finds 86% of Americans are stressed by grocery costs, with over half calling it a major anxiety.

MISERY CRISIS

**THE NEW  
REPUBLIC**

## **Affordability Politics Are Here to Stay**

 **NBC NEWS**

## **American workers are getting the smallest slice of the pie on record**

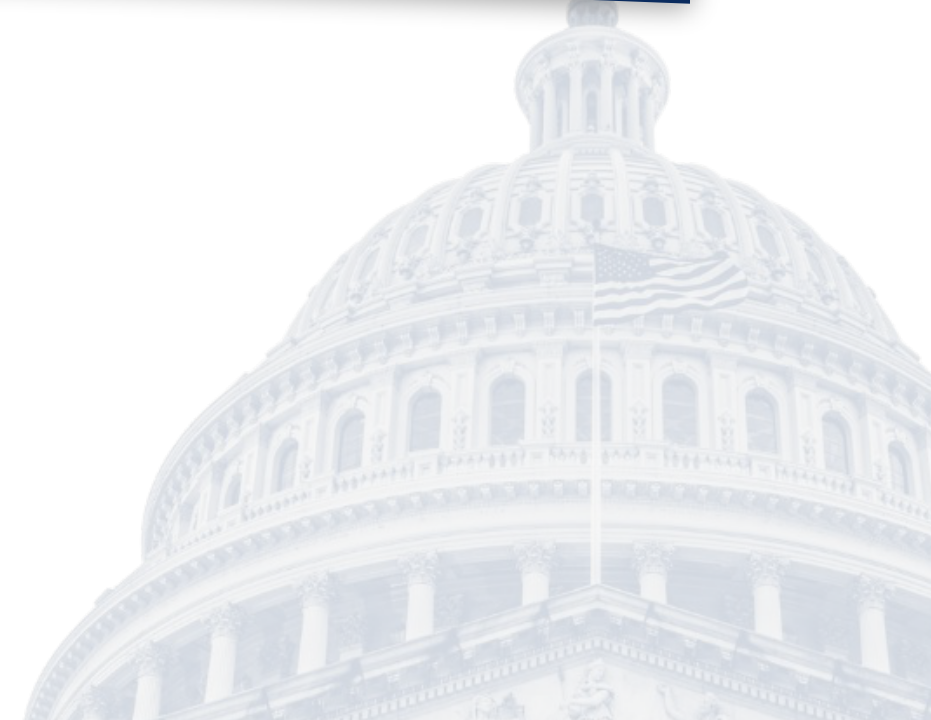
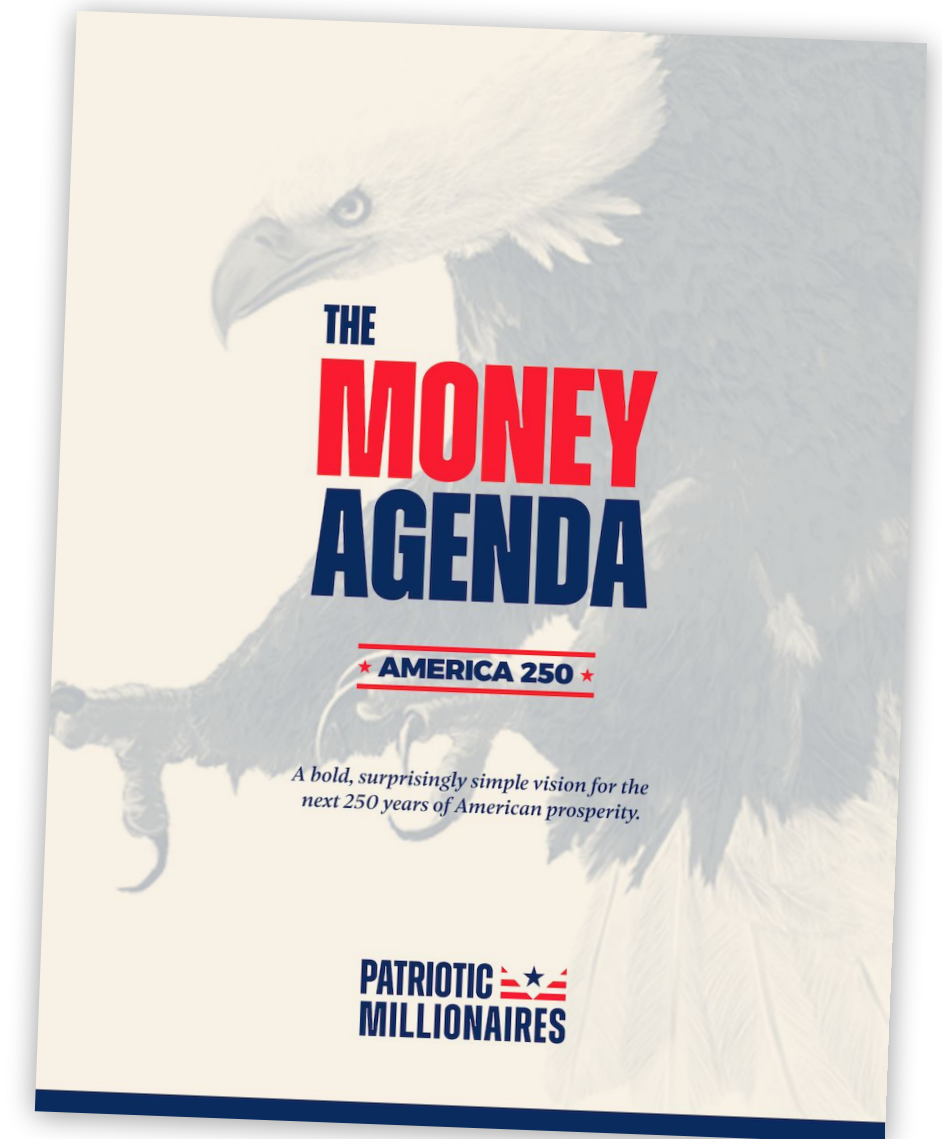
**yahoo!**  
news

Republicans, Democrats  
attempt to address  
affordability ahead of  
midterms

# The MONEY Agenda

The **MONEY Agenda (TMA)** is a bold, surprisingly simple policy framework that will:

- **Assert a basic level of fairness in our tax code** and our economy by treating all income equally for tax purposes:
  - → **Equal Tax Act H.R. 5336 and S. 4112**
- **Stabilize the economic lives of working class Americans** by shifting tax revenue responsibility to the millionaire class:
  - → **Working Americans' Tax Cut Act H.R. 7937 and S. 4083**
- **Connect the fortunes of American business to the fortunes of American families**
  - **Establish a “Cost of Living” mandate for large businesses**
  - → **Prosperity for American Workers Act**
- **Dismantle oligarchical wealth concentration**
  - → **Anti-Oligarch Act (In process, seeking institutional partners)**



# The PROSPERITY FOR AMERICAN WORKERS ACT

*Requires big business to pay at the least  
cost of living or be taxed the difference.*

# The Legislation:

- Levies a tax on big companies for every employee paid less than the cost of living;
- “Cost of living” calculation is based on available IRS data:
  - Regionally adjusted: less in low cost areas, higher in high cost areas;
- Applies ONLY to high-revenue businesses (\$10 million+ annual revenues);
- Phased in over 10 years;
  - Starts at 10% of the difference;
  - By year ten, tax is equal to 100% the difference between cost of living and wages;
- Applies to about 40% of the labor market;
- Revenues positive prior to implementation and after (positive \$ for Social Security);
- Respects existing collective bargaining agreements.

# Regional Cost of Living Wage Calculation

- Based on IRS Collection Financial Standards, which are changed annually based on inflation;
- Regionally-specific costs considered:
  - Housing, Transportation, and Utilities;
- National average costs considered:
  - Food, Clothing, Out-of-pocket healthcare expenses;
- Two Tiers:
  - Hourly employees;
  - 1099 employees +10%.

# Why It's Great:

- POPULAR across the ideological spectrum of the center-center/left;
- HUGE impact: Will move 40% of the labor market and thus likely move the whole labor market;
- EASY to message;
- CAN PASS with 51 votes via Budget Reconciliation;
  - Because it has significant budgetary impact both during implementation and when fully implemented;
  - Minimum wage legislation requires 60 votes.
- Talking Points:
  - American taxpayers should not be subsidizing Walmart, Amazon;
  - Recouping cost of low wages;
  - Stop subsidizing the bonuses of overpaid executives;

**“I want to thank  
every Amazon  
employee and every  
Amazon customer  
because you guys  
paid for all of this.”**

**JEFF BEZOS**

Founder & Executive Chairman, Amazon



# AMAZON

## A CASE STUDY FROM 2025

The Washington Post  
*Democracy Dies in Darkness*

## With more Amazon workers on SNAP benefits, company offers Whole Foods discounts

Amazon said the discounts are a response to employee feedback, not a reaction to a recent government report.

September 17, 2026

🔗 📌 📄 225

 Make us preferred on Google



# AMAZON

## A CASE STUDY FROM 2025

- 2025 revenue: \$717 billion
- Amazon's Operating Income: \$80 billion
- 1.1 million U.S. employees
- Market Cap: \$2.70 trillion (as of 9/25/2026)
- Jeff Bezos' Net Worth: \$370.1 billion

**Sources:**

<https://stockanalysis.com/stocks/amzn/employees/>

<https://www.aol.com/articles/jeff-bezos-gave-every-american-103720977.html>

# AMAZON

## A CASE STUDY FROM 2025

### Delivery Station Warehouse Associate

JOB-US-0000011653

 Pay rate Up to **\$18.50**  
Sign on Bonus up to \$3000

 394 Fanning Fields Rd, Mills River, NC 28759 [Plan your commute](#) 



Type

Full Time, Part Time



Duration

Seasonal



Language

English

**“Cost of Living” in Mill Valley, NC = \$22.40**

**Under Payment Per Hour: \$3.90**

**Each Full Time Worker is Underpaid: \$7,800 per year**

**There are around 800,000 Amazon Warehouse Workers in the US**

**Sources:**

<https://hiring.amazon.com/app#/jobDetail?jobId=JOB-US-0000011653&locale=en-US&recommended=1&fromVanity=1>

<https://www.erieri.com/cost-of-living/united-states/north-carolina/mills-river>

[https://www.bestplaces.net/cost\\_of\\_living/city/nc/mills\\_river](https://www.bestplaces.net/cost_of_living/city/nc/mills_river)

# Calculating the Excise Tax with 2025 Numbers:

→ Cost of Living in Henderson County, NC: **\$22.40\***

|                           |               |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| Cost of Living*:          | \$22.40       |
| Wage:                     | -\$18.50      |
| Difference:               | <b>\$3.90</b> |
| Tax Year 1 <sup>+</sup> : | \$0.39        |
| Tax Year 2:               | \$0.78        |
| Tax Year 3:               | \$1.17        |
| Tax Year 10:              | \$3.90        |

<sup>+</sup> Math assumes static Amazon wage and Cost of Living Wage for illustrative purposes only

## MIT Cost of Living Calculator Henderson County, NC

|              | 1 ADULT    |         |            |            |
|--------------|------------|---------|------------|------------|
|              | 0 Children | 1 Child | 2 Children | 3 Children |
| Living Wage  | \$22.40    | \$36.83 | \$45.42    | \$55.83    |
| Poverty Wage | \$7.67     | \$10.40 | \$13.13    | \$15.87    |
| Minimum Wage | \$7.25     | \$7.25  | \$7.25     | \$7.25     |

\* estimated Cost of Living according to MIT Living Wage calculator, an approximation to numbers from IRS Collection Financial Standards

# AMAZON

## A CASE STUDY FROM 2025

- Amazon's 2025 Stores Profit ~\$30 billion
- If each Amazon warehouse worker is underpaid ~\$9,000
- There are 800,000 Amazon warehouse workers in US
- **Amazon underpaying by \$7.2 BILLION (and that's just warehouse workers!)**

#### Sources:

[https://cued.uic.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/219/2023/10/Pain-Points\\_Final\\_Oct2023.pdf#:~:text=The%20leading%20online%20retailer%20in%20the%20United,are%20some%20key%20findings%20on%20these%20issues](https://cued.uic.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/219/2023/10/Pain-Points_Final_Oct2023.pdf#:~:text=The%20leading%20online%20retailer%20in%20the%20United,are%20some%20key%20findings%20on%20these%20issues)  
<https://ir.aboutamazon.com/news-release/news-release-details/2025/Amazon-com-Announces-Third-Quarter-Results/#:~:text=Fourth%20Quarter%202025%20Guidance,Conference%20Call%20Information>  
<https://futuraumgroup.com/insights/amazon-q3-fy-2025-earnings-aws-reaccelerates-retail-and-ads-grow/>

# Employers with the Highest Number of SNAP Beneficiaries\*

\*\*in select states



DOORDASH



\*As reported by the Washington Post and GAO:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2026/07/22/amazon-gig-companies-see-spike-workers-snap-medicaid-study-shows/>

\*\*According to data provided by the Government Accountability Office, which collected data from 15 agencies in 11 states.

This data is not generalizable to all states or all NDNE wage-earning Medicaid enrollees or adult wage-earning SNAP recipients nationwide

# **This legislation is NOT:**

- **NOT a replacement for minimum wage law**
- **NOT a substitute for corporate tax reform.**

# ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Median pay at  
most of top 20  
low-wage  
firms **Doesn't**  
Cover the  
Basics.

**Median Pay at Most Top 20 Low-Wage Firms Doesn't Cover Basics**  
*Median pay v. income levels for SNAP/Medicaid for a 3-person family and for 2 BR rent, 2024*



Source: Institute for Policy Studies analysis of company proxy statements

# McDONALD'S TODAY:

Lowest wages: **\$8.89/hr<sup>1</sup>**

Average wage: **\$13.61/hr<sup>2</sup>**

Median Cost of Living for a  
Single Adult: **~\$21/hr<sup>3</sup>**

CEO Pay: **\$19 Million<sup>4</sup>**



**CHRIS KEMPCZINSKI**  
McDonald's Chief Executive Officer

**Sources:**

<sup>1 2</sup> <https://www.ziprecruiter.com/Salaries/Mcdonalds-Crew-Salary>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.fflw.org/blog/living-wage-for-a-single-person>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.restaurantbusinessonline.com/financing/mcdonalds-ceo-chris-kempczinski-got-raise-last-year>

# CEOS vs PEOPLE WHO ACTUALLY DO THE WORK

Compensation ratio:

- In 1965 - **20:1**
- In 1989 - **60:1**
- In 2025 - **325:1**



Image: Nuvolanevicata | Shutterstock

