

Stache Act Would Trim Taxes for Mustachioed

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Now that the payroll tax cut extension is safely out of the way, the latest tax legislation gambit in Congress appears to be a tongue-in-cheek effort to provide an annual \$250 tax deduction for people with mustaches.

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What would the \$250 be spent for, you might ask? Grooming supplies, mustache wax and trimmers can be expensive. The effort is being spearheaded by a group called the American Mustache Institute, which has teamed up with H&R Block on a social media campaign via [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) to promote the legislation. They're getting help from a few celebrities, including singer John Oates of Hall & Oates, Ellie Kemper of the sitcom "The Office," and Milwaukee Brewers pitcher John Axford.

The AMI is planning to hold a Million Mustache March in Washington, D.C., on April 1, which should be a giveaway that the campaign is not altogether serious. In fact, when we received an email about it at the Accounting Today offices, some of us wondered if the whole thing was an April Fool's Day prank or a publicity stunt.

But there do appear to be at least some serious elements to the campaign. For one thing, H&R Block has pledged to donate up to \$10,000 to a charity known as Millions from One, which delivers clean drinking water to parts of the world where it is scarce, for everybody who participates in the march or visits the [StacheAct.com](#) Facebook page to try on a mustache. Visitors to the page can upload their own photo, or get one taken through their computer's webcam, and then add a "Presidential mustache" modeled after Teddy Roosevelt, Grover Cleveland, Chester Alan Arthur and other former leaders of the free world who sported hairy upper lips.

The STACHE (Stimulus to Allow for Critical Hair Expenses) Act is actually making some progress in Congress too. This week, mustachioed lawmaker Rep. Roscoe Bartlett, R-Md., passed along the proposal to the tax-writing House Ways and Means Committee for study. The proposal is based on a 2010 paper by Dr. John Yeutter, an associate professor of accounting and tax policy at Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Okla., who posited a link between the growth and maintenance of mustaches and incremental income. He suggested that mustache maintenance costs should be considered a deductible expense related

to the production of income under Section 212 of the Tax Code. Coincidentally, in a YouTube video promoting the campaign, Yeutter sports an elaborately waxed mustache.

The campaign is led by goateed AMI chairman Dr. Aaron Perlut, who claims that well-groomed mustaches increase good looks by 38 percent and help bail out the economy. His group has met with the Cato Institute think tank and Congress's Joint Committee on Taxation.

Given the abundance of questionable tax credits and deductions littering the Tax Code, a tax break for mustache-grooming supplies might not be so outlandish after all. We'll have to twirl that one around for a while.