



Op: Why everyone should enjoy taxes

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Taxes are everywhere. We can't escape from them so we might as well try to understand them and their purpose. There are a lot of different taxes we are required to pay and it is important to know each of them and what they represent. There are income taxes that vary depending on how much you make, and there are sales taxes, a percentage tacked onto the end of your bill per dollar you spend at a store. There is even something called the "Sin Tax," which are taxes put specifically on tobacco and alcohol in order to make these items more expensive.

One of the biggest problems with taxes isn't that we have to pay them, but that so many people look on them with scorn and hatred. There's even a 30-year-long movement among conservatives to "Starve the Beast." This means that the government is cutting any and all taxes according to some harebrained argument that it will make the U.S. government efficient, according to the Cato Institute.

The problem with that argument and the scorn for taxes is simple, without them the United States wouldn't exist. Taxes fund roads, libraries, police departments, fire departments, public universities, national parks, the military and veteran benefits. Taxes fund research and agriculture, Medicare, social security and many other services that are beneficial to our lives that we take for granted today.

For example, public education is one of the most important services the government provides to U.S. citizens. Without proper education, children wouldn't be taught the things they need to become doctors, teachers, scientists, or leaders of business. The bulk of education funding is, given by state and local governments which provide as much as 93 percent of school funding, according to a PBS article titled "How do we fund our schools?"

Most of this money comes from income, sales and property taxes. If taxes were cut, schools would face a corresponding decrease in how much money they are allotted by local municipalities, the state and the federal government. That would force schools to adjust to their

lowered funding, which might come in the form of firing teachers, making do with obsolete equipment, or shutting down programs.

If a car has no gasoline then it won't go anywhere, just as the government will be incapable of serving its people without funding. Starving the beast like some conservative groups want will do nothing to benefit the United States, as reported by Forbes. If taxes were cut even further, bridges would fail, police departments would be poorly trained and equipped, university costs would skyrocket and the military would be underfunded and understaffed.

While some of these institutions have their faults, the United States would be much worse without them. Without advanced education the United States will no longer be a leader in technology and innovation, but a dog that begs for scraps at the dinner table. Without good transportation infrastructure costs on food will spike and the roads you drive on will have more than a few potholes.

You might think taxes are an annoyance, but living without electricity and roads would be a lot worse. Taxes aren't a loss of money, but an investment in the betterment of the United States. If you have a family, younger siblings, or hope to have children someday you're keeping the country working even if there are a few wrenches stuck in between the gears. Even if you don't have or want children, there are still other people out there who will benefit from what you will pay through taxes.

So buck up and pay those taxes with a strained smile. Without that money, we would be without roads or bridges, our doctors, instead of working at the public hospital, would have to run off to a private practice, and that college professor would be eating ramen like a college student. There is more good than bad that comes out of paying taxes.