



## The rich are paying a lot more in taxes

September 8, 2015

Scott Greenberg for the Tax Foundation: 2013 was a year of many changes to the U.S. tax code, and some of the most significant changes were targeted at raising taxes on high-income Americans. The fiscal cliff tax deal created a new 39.6 percent income tax bracket, raised the top rate on capital gains to 20 percent, and imposed a limitation on itemized deductions for high-income Americans. Meanwhile, the Affordable Care Act's new 3.8 percent Net Investment Income Tax went into effect at the beginning of 2013.

By the end of 2013, it had become clear that these changes would lead to a much higher tax bill for high-income Americans, but just how high would their taxes rise? New data from the IRS, released yesterday, shows how tax rates for high-income Americans changed between 2012 and 2013 ...:

For households making over \$500,000, taxes rose dramatically in 2013. Americans making between \$1 million and \$2 million saw their effective income tax rates rise from 24.2 percent to 28.6 percent between 2013 and 2014; on average, these taxpayers paid \$53,050 more in taxes.

For the highest-income taxpayers, rates spiked by even greater amounts. Taxpayers with more than \$10 million of income saw their average rates rise from 19.8 percent to 26.1 percent, equivalent to an average tax hike of \$1.52 million.

### School's Out

Farah Z. Ahmad and Tiffany D. Miller for the Center for American Progress: Unfortunately, high rates of truancy — or unexcused absences from school — have become an increasingly challenging issue for educators across the nation.

Time away from the classroom hurts a student's chance to succeed. In fact, truancy is a distinct predictor of low student achievement and high school dropout rates. As a result, students who miss school may face lifelong economic consequences. In fact, truancy can be a gateway to the school-to-prison pipeline ...

In 2012, an estimated 7.5 million students were chronically absent nationwide, and, according to several studies, low-income students and students of color were more likely to be absent. This is disconcerting given that, in 2013, 14.7 million children were living in poverty nationwide. In fact, the child poverty rate of 19.9 percent was significantly higher than the poverty rate for working-age adults at 13.6 percent and seniors at 9.5 percent. Additionally, high school absenteeism rates for students of color are particularly troubling because our nation is becoming increasingly diverse: People of color are projected to be the majority of the U.S. population in the early 2040s. More than half of all babies born today are children of color, and for the first time in history, the majority of the 2014–2015 public school K-12 population is projected to be students of color.

As the United States undergoes these drastic demographic shifts, it is even more important for leaders to take action now, as the cost of truancy is simply too high.

## **YOU CAN SAY 'I DO'**

Ilya Shapiro for the Cato Institute: Saying "I do" and calling someone your spouse who legally isn't shouldn't be a crime, but it can be in Utah. While polygamy — being lawfully married to multiple people — isn't legal in any state, due to its unique history, Utah has some of the strictest anti-bigamy laws in the country. Which probably makes starring in a reality TV show based on your plural marriage not the best idea for Utahns.

Nevertheless, TLC's "Sister Wives" revolves around Kodi Brown, his four partners (Meri, Janelle, Christine and Robyn) and their 17 children. While Kodi is only legally married to one of the women, he claims he is in a "spiritual union" with each of the others, and describes all four as his wives — and that puts the Browns on the wrong side of Utah's bigamy law. The day after the show premiered in 2010, local authorities announced they were investigating the family. ...

Whether or not the Utah law violates the Browns' religious liberty, it's a clear affront to the First Amendment's protection of free speech.

In Utah, it's legal to have an "open" marriage and any number of unmarried consenting adults can live together, have sex with each other, pool their finances and describe themselves as being in a long-term polyamorous relationship. They just can't use the "M" word.