

# TAX WALL STREET

## We need good jobs NOW!

**How many people do you know that are unemployed?**

**How many do you know that got some of the \$145,000,000,000 (yes, that's \$145 billion) that went into banker's pockets last year, after we bailed them out?**

This is just the latest outrage. For 30 years, corporate CEOs and Wall Street speculators have put the squeeze on workers by cutting their own taxes and raising ours; privatizing public services so they make more profit and we get less services; and busting our unions so they can make more money while we the workers don't make enough to pay our mortgages or rent.

- They used their rising profits to lobby Congress for banking deregulation, and cuts to consumer protections.
- Then they invented unscrupulous mortgage and investing practices, turning our financial system into a casino.
- When their speculation didn't pay off, they got Congress to bail them out to the tune of \$15,000 for every household in America.
- Even after the bailout they have failed to extend credit to businesses, failed to renegotiate mortgages, continued to pay lavish salaries and bonuses, and spent millions lobbying against financial reform, fair taxes and a recovery for the rest of us.

**It's time to make the bankers pay, for once.  
Call Congress; tell them to pass a  
massive jobs bill this year!**

A tax on the speculators of the Wall Street casino could put 3 million people to work fixing our infrastructure, teaching our children, making our factories more sustainable and improving our public services.

**Call Congress at (202) 224-3121**

Tell the operator your home address and you'll be connected to your Representatives' offices. Ask your Representatives to:

- **Create millions of good new jobs.** The Local Jobs for America Act (H.R. 4812), which would put 1 million people to work, is a good start, but it doesn't go nearly far enough. We need a massive jobs bill to help state governments and jump-start the economy.
- **Tax the Wall Street speculators that broke our economy.** A small tax on speculators (H.R. 4191: Let Wall Street Pay for the Restoration of Main Street Act of 2009) would pay for 3 million good jobs while restraining the wall street 'casino'.
- **Rein in the Big Banks and protect consumers.** We need a strong, independent Consumer Financial Protection Agency and broad re-regulation of the banking industry.

# Understanding what caused the Great Recession will help us Fix It...

In March, the private sector created only about 114,000 more jobs. Unfortunately, this is little solace to the 25 million people who are either unemployed, underemployed, no longer searching for work, or working far fewer hours than they desire.

A major jobs bill will be difficult to win because of the deficit hysteria in Washington, D.C., which is a deliberate attempt to cover up the costs of our government's wars abroad, the "socialism for the rich" bank bailouts and deregulation, and 30 years of massive neoliberal tax cuts for corporations and the rich. Deficit hysteria is also an excuse for attacks on working people's unions and on our Social Security, Medicare and safety net programs.

Beginning in the 1940's, the American economy enjoyed a period of sustained growth. Workers organized strong unions and demanded a share in that prosperity, and thus raised the wage standards for everyone else too. However, starting in the late 1970's, and especially under President Reagan in the 1980's, the government began working with corporations to bust unions and deregulate the banking and finance industry. Many American families who had worked their way into the middle class saw their wages dropping behind the rate of inflation, because they were losing the power in the workplace to demand a fair share of corporate profits in their wages.

In order to continue to pay for housing, healthcare, and other necessities, many people had to work harder and longer. When that was not enough, they began going into debt to pay the bills. Along came the housing bubble and deceptive bank practices meant to profit off of people's need to borrow. When the housing bubble burst and the economy tanked, ordinary people stopped buying goods and services out of fear of the future.

Now, we are stuck with a downward spiral where few can afford to buy anything, which means there is less need for workers to produce goods and services, and thus the economy slows down. It's a vicious circle – less income, less buying, thus less work to be done. To top it all off, banks are refusing to lend to small businesses to help them keep functioning through this recession.

**The federal government must step in with a huge second stimulus bill to fund jobs and services.** There is a lot of fear-mongering about the size of the budget deficit, but this is not the time to be worrying about that. The private sector is simply not up to the task of driving a real economic recovery. Pumping public money into jobs programs will keep the economy afloat, making up for lower private spending as corporations and banks wait out the downturn. Counter-cyclical spending (government spending, not saving, during a recession) is the best tool we have for jump-starting the economy. **Once people are back at work, more of them will have the money in their pockets to buy the goods and services that keep the economy moving.**

Furthermore, if the federal government doesn't pass such a stimulus bill, then we will likely see a large-scale social disaster, as state and local governments will have to cut public services and lay off public workers who provide those services, in education (K-12 as well as higher education), health care, buses and trains, libraries, parks, public safety like police and fire departments, and sanitation, etc. Right now is the moment when communities are hurting more than ever, with high unemployment and an increased need for public services.

We also need to force the banks to lend the money they are hoarding, stop foreclosing on peoples' homes, and stop gambling on our future. Ultimately, we should question the capitalist system, which leads inevitably to great inequalities in power and wealth between workers and bosses, and an unstable economic cycle prone to bubbles and crashes which catch ordinary people unawares but help the banks and corporations make a big profit.



**Obama's not a socialist, but we are!**  
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