



Forum Policy Alert –Tax Reform

Friday, October 13, 2017

Tax Reform: Universal Charitable Giving Act

Rep. Mark Walker (R-N.C.), the chairman of the Republican Study Committee, has introduced a bill to create a new deduction for charitable contributions for those who don't itemize. United Philanthropy Forum commends Rep. Walker for his efforts to expand the charitable deduction to all Americans. We believe this legislation is a step in the right direction and will help advance the discussion on meaningful tax reform.

Under current law, tax incentives for charitable contributions are only available to taxpayers that itemize their taxes. Rep. Walker's bill, the [Universal Charitable Giving Act \(H.R. 3988\)](#) would allow taxpayers who take the standard deduction to also deduct their charitable contributions up to an amount equal to one-third of the standard deduction.

We recognize that the overall impact this proposal would have on charitable giving is not completely known and further analysis is underway. One initial concern is what impact a cap would have on charitable giving in the context of full tax reform. Still, we are glad to see interest on Capitol Hill in finding solutions that would incentivize more Americans to invest in their communities through charitable giving. We are eager to work with Rep. Walker on our goal of having Congress enact a universal charitable deduction that protects the full scope and value of the charitable deduction.

United Philanthropy Forum, as part of our work within the Charitable Giving Coalition, is in the process of crafting a collective statement on the Walker bill and will share that with you when it is ready along with a full strategy for action.

Read Latest Chronicle Article on Universal Charitable Deduction

United Philanthropy Forum President & CEO David Biemesderfer is featured in [a new article in The Chronicle of Philanthropy](#) about the universal charitable deduction. The article explains some of the opportunities and challenges of including the universal charitable deduction in tax reform legislation.

Key Messages on Universal Charitable Deduction

- Please support an effective and efficient bill that would incentivize the most charitable giving and impose the least possible limitations on that incentive.
- Our proposed solution is simple: make the charitable deduction available to all taxpayers through a universal charitable deduction.

- The universal charitable deduction would not only offset the estimated losses in charitable giving under proposed tax reform measures, but would allow people at all income levels to take advantage of this 100-year-old, uniquely American incentive.

Tax Reform Resources

- Read *The Hill's* [Key conservative Republican eyes bigger tax break for charity](#)
- Read Rep. Walker's bill: [Universal Charitable Giving Act \(H.R. 3988\)](#)
- Read Rep. Walker's [charitable giving webpage](#)
- Read [Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy](#) research
- Visit [Forum's policy page on the charitable deduction](#) to access additional resources