



Tax Fairness Advocacy Toolkit

Sample Letters to the Editor

A. Tax Fairness

[Date]

[Your Address]

[Editor's Name]
[Newspaper Address]

Dear Editor:

Today's challenges bring opportunity. Now is the time for state leaders to make fiscally responsible choices that will help rebuild our state's economic health and move us toward long-term prosperity.

Illinois' massive budget shortfall makes it more important than ever to focus on protecting the well-being of our children, families and communities. To do this, we need to both preserve the programs families rely on and ease the tax burden on working families.

More resources are needed to stabilize vital education, health and human services and to help our state pay its most pressing bills. An income tax increase that protects many working families from a higher tax burden is the fairest and most effective way to generate new revenues.

Low- and middle-income families struggle to make ends meet and already pay more than their fair share in state and local taxes. We support greater use of credits and exemptions to help working families hang on to more of their hard-earned income at tax time. Specifically, increasing the state Earned Income Tax Credit would provide tax relief for the state's lowest-income families.

That's why we must commit to supporting this responsible course of action, turning challenges into opportunities to do good for our children, families and communities. We ask state leaders to do likewise.

Sincerely,

[Your Name or your Group's Name]



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Sample Letters to the Editor

B. Tax Day

[Date]

[Your Address]

[Editor's Name]
[Newspaper Address]

Dear Editor:

As Tax Day approaches, many of Illinois' low-income families are struggling not only to make ends meet, but to cover their tax bills. As an overall percentage of their earnings, struggling families often pay twice as much as wealthier households do on state and local taxes.

The situation could grow even more drastic if taxes are increased without measures to level the playing field. Fortunately, there is a powerful tool available to reduce taxes for low-income families and help lift them out of poverty: the Illinois Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

The EITC provides struggling, working families with a well-deserved break on their taxes. Yet, the maximum credit is only about \$240 per qualifying household in Illinois—the second-smallest state EITC in the nation.

Illinois should increase the size of the EITC so that low-income families get the tax relief they so desperately need and so clearly deserve.

As Tax Day nears and families are hit hard by Illinois' unfair tax system, let us use this as an opportunity to call for positive change.

Sincerely,

[Your Name or your Group's Name]



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Sample Letters to the Editor

C. Response to Governor's Proposal

[Date]

[Your Address]

[Editor's Name]
[Newspaper Address]

Dear Editor:

Today's challenges bring opportunity. Now is the time for state leaders to make fiscally responsible choices that will help rebuild our state's economic health and move us toward long-term prosperity.

We applaud Governor Quinn's courage and leadership for proposing an income tax package that would raise much-needed revenues while also reducing taxes for many low- and middle-income families by increasing the personal exemption.

In the face of a massive budget deficit, Illinois must take decisive action to generate new revenue. A carefully crafted income tax increase is a critical first step toward raising revenues that support vitally important programs on which our children and families depend.

There's also an opportunity to build on the Governor's efforts to increase tax fairness. Illinois has one of the most unfair tax systems in the nation. Substantially increasing the size of the state Earned Income Tax Credit, which reduces taxes for low-income, working families, is an important tool for increasing fairness and reducing poverty that must be considered.

We urge state policymakers to act now in order to secure a brighter future for our families, children and communities.

Sincerely,

[Your Name or your Group's Name]