

an america that works:

**a common-sense plan to empower
american businesses & support
american workers.**



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Our nation faces many challenges, but perhaps none is more pressing than that of growing our economy.

The fact is, 1.5-percent growth in GDP is simply unsustainable. If that trend continues, we will not be able to fund priorities such as bolstering our national security, taking care of our veterans, combatting the addiction crisis, funding public education, and preserving our environment.

The positive impact of strong, sustained economic growth has the potential to not only grow small businesses and help families make ends meet, but also address the many other pressures we face.

As your independent voice in Congress, I'm working with leaders of both parties to put politics aside and do what we were sent to Washington, D.C. to do: stand up for hardworking families and unleash the power of the American economy. *An America That Works* is a bipartisan playbook for this Congress to empower American businesses and support American workers.

I hope you'll join me.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian". The signature is stylized with a long horizontal stroke underneath the name.

Brian Fitzpatrick
Pennsylvania's 8th District

An America That Works:
*A Common-Sense Plan to Empower American
Business & Support American Workers*

Tax & Regulatory Reform

Regulatory Reform:

When our local small businesses succeed, they create opportunity, invigorate communities and preserve the distinct character of our local economy. Unfortunately, top-down, one-size-fits-all regulations from Washington too often miss Wall Street and hit Main Street – increasing consumer fees, slowing economic growth and crushing the small community businesses crucial to Bucks and Montgomery county families and businesses.

Common sense regulatory reform is vital to the success of our economy. However, it is equally important that we never lose sight of the role smart, effective regulations that protect workers, the environment or our health. I believe that we can strike the right balance on regulations.

- **REINS Act [H.R. 26]:** Reforms the outdated regulatory process that hurts job creation by requiring an up-or-down vote in Congress on any agency regulation with an economic cost of \$100 million or more.
- **Financial CHOICE Act [H.R. 10]:** Dodd-Frank promised to end ‘too big to fail,’ but instead gave us ‘too small to succeed.’ Unlike big banks, which can afford an army of lawyers and regulatory experts to navigate the Dodd-Frank loopholes, the community banks and credit unions that empower entrepreneurship and local lending have been squeezed out. Since the enactment of Dodd-Frank, nearly *1,900 banks - many of which were community financial institutions - have vanished, leaving consumers with fewer choices and increased fees.* The Financial CHOICE Act is a clear-eyed reform that levels the financial playing field, supports access to capital and credit for all Americans, prevents taxpayer-funded bailouts, and increases penalties for white-collar criminals and accountability for regulators. Moreover, it’s a victory for taxpayers: the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office reports that the legislation would save taxpayers over \$24 billion.

Tax Reform:

As one of just 10 Certified Public Accountants in Congress I can tell you a secret: very few people – let alone many politicians - understand our current tax code and, if they do, they're making a lot of money off it.

Standing at 70,000 pages, the United States tax code is nothing short of a roadblock to economic growth – punishing Main Street businesses and working families while corporations and the wealthy pay accountants to navigate the convoluted system. Simply put, the system is broken and we're stuck paying for it.

If this Congress is serious about standing up for middle class families and unleashing the power of the American economy, tax reform is the natural starting point. Comprehensive tax reform should include:

Growth: It has been over 30 years since the last major overhaul of our tax system. Despite rapid economic change from technology to medicine, the tax code has only expanded its burdens on the American people, restricting opportunity and economic freedom. A successful tax plan should:

- Increase take-home pay for hardworking Americans by reducing the number of tax brackets and cutting individual rates
- Lower rates for small businesses and job creators so they can invest in growing their business, hiring new workers and raising wages
- Repeal the 'Death Tax'
- Allow American businesses to immediately write off the full costs of new investments – including research and development, or technology

Simplicity: At over 70,000 pages, the current tax code forces American taxpayers to navigate a maze of burdensome regulations and compliance costs that include treasury regulations, IRS forms, instructions, publications and other federal guidance. A successful tax plan should:

- Simplify tax benefits for families
- Reduce numerous exemptions, deductions, and credits that riddle the tax code, making it less fair for those who cannot take advantage of such provisions

Service: Americans pay taxes voluntarily knowing that their tax dollars fund the federal government. As the agency in charge of this relationship, the IRS should have a singular focus: 'Service First.' A successful tax plan should:

- Restructure the IRS to resolve routine disputes quickly
- Hold the IRS commissioner accountable to the people by implementing term limits, keeping politics out of the IRS

Additional legislative measures:

- ***PACE Act [H.R.3632]:*** Amends the Internal Revenue Code, with respect to the tax credit for expenses for household and dependent care services necessary for gainful employment (known as the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit), to: (1) make the credit refundable, (2) increase the rate for the credit, and (3) require the dollar amounts for such credit to be adjusted for inflation after 2017. Also increases the amount of employer-provided dependent care assistance which may be excluded from the gross income of an employee and requires the increased exclusion amount to be adjusted for inflation after 2018.
- ***Child Tax Credit Protection Act of 2017 [H.R.1919]:*** Amends the Internal Revenue Code to expand the identification requirements for the child tax credit to require taxpayers to provide a valid identification number (i.e., a Social Security account number issued by the Social Security Administration) on their tax returns in addition to the name and taxpayer identification number of each qualifying child. A "valid identification number" does not include a taxpayer identification number issued by the Internal Revenue Service.

Made in the USA

American manufacturing means American jobs. In Pennsylvania, more than 12,000 manufacturing firms produced more than \$85 billion in goods in 2015, making up more than 12 percent of the state's GDP. The number of manufacturing employees totaled 556,000 in 2016, earning an average of \$72,500.

People in my community understand that when they buy American they're not only buying quality products, they're helping American businesses – and American workers – in their neighborhoods and across the country. The ***Made in America Act [H.R.3850]*** would connect American consumers to American manufacturers like never before by creating a definitive, standardized definition of American-made goods.

The *Made in America Act* would encourage and educate consumers on buying “Made In America” products by creating an ‘America Star Program’ similar to the successful [Energy Star](#) and [USDA Certified Organic](#) programs. The new voluntary program would encourage manufacturers to meet certain domestic manufacturing benchmarks, showing the percentage of the product made in the U.S.A., while providing consumers an easy way to identify American made products. The Federal Trade Commission would be responsible for overseeing the development of the guidelines, labeling and enforcement.

Strengthening Federal Contracting

Bucks and Montgomery County businesses are among the best in the nation and often on the cutting edge of their industries — from aerospace engineering to widget manufacturing, so it's no wonder why the military and other federal agencies are eager to partner with them to accomplish important national objectives like equipping our armed forces or building our roads.

- ***Buy American Improvement Act of 2017 [H.R.904]***: Applies ‘Buy American’ requirements to federal spending programs that are not covered in current law and will close loopholes in programs where ‘Buy American’ requirements are already law. Additionally, the measure sets domestic content standards for indirect purchases by U.S. Department of Transportation grantees.
- ***Small Business Payment for Performance Act of 2017 [H.R.2594]***: Amends the *Small Business Act* to provide interim partial payment to small business contractors that request an equitable adjustment due to a change in the terms of a construction contract

- ***BOSS Act [H.R.2541]***: Directs the Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology to enter into an arrangement with the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a study on the role of incubators and accelerators in the commercialization of federally funded research and regional economic development.

A 21st Century Workforce

We need to rethink American education and job training so we're preparing students for a 21st century job market. From student loans to apprenticeship opportunities to investing in our veterans, there is real bipartisan momentum to better educate and train the workforce of today... and tomorrow.

Apprenticeships:

Substantive apprenticeship programs are an integral part of the quality education that leads to good paying American jobs. A skilled workforce is a critical component to a continued productive economy, but in recent decades employers have been experiencing a shortage of properly trained, available workers.

By closing the skills gap, this bipartisan program will encourage more good-paying jobs for working families, while addressing our nation's current shortage of trained workers.

- ***Apprenticeship and Jobs Training Act of 2017 [H.R.3707]***: Allows employers a business-related tax credit for up to \$5,000 for the training of a qualified individual in a qualified apprenticeship program or multi-employer apprenticeship program.
- ***American Apprenticeship Act [S. 862]***: Directs the Department of Labor to make competitive grants to assist states in, and to pay for the federal share of between 20% and 50% of the cost of, instruction associated with pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs.
- ***529 OPTIONS Act [H.R.3395]***: Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow tax free distributions from section 529 college

savings plans for certain expenses associated with registered apprenticeship programs

Veterans:

Our veterans are uniquely skilled to power our economy forward. By expanding educational opportunities, we can lower the unacceptably high unemployment rate in the veteran community and leveraging their training into in-demand jobs.

- ***Forever GI Bill [H.R. 3218]***: Improves and extends GI Bill benefits by removing time restrictions for service members using the GI Bill, consolidates the GI Bill into a single program over time to reduce administrative costs, increases GI Bill funding for Reservists and Guardsmen, and supports veterans who enter technical courses.

Student Loans:

For too many, student loan debt is a crippling burden that impacts their involvement in our economy and achieving personal goals like owning a home, starting a family and supporting their community. We need to find new ways to reduce barriers to educational opportunities and post-graduation success.

- ***Employer Participation in Student Loan Assistance Act [H.R.795]***: Amends the Internal Revenue Code to extend the tax exclusion for employer-provided educational assistance to include payments of qualified education loans by an employer to either an employee or a lender.
- ***Student Loan Refinancing and Recalculating Act [H.R. 4001]***: Allows students to refinance their student loan interest rates, lower future student loan interest rates, eliminate origination fees on student loans, delay student loan interest rate accrual for low-income and middle-class borrowers while they are pursuing their education, and allow for borrowers in medical or dental residencies to defer payments until the completion of their program.

Investing in Employees

A small business is only as strong as its employees. Congress must support efforts to not only train the next generation of workers, but also clear the way for businesses to invest in their success.

- ***Promotion and Expansion of Private Employee Ownership Act of 2017 [H.R.2092]***: Amends the Internal Revenue Code to: (1) extend to all domestic corporations, including S corporations, provisions allowing deferral of tax on gain from the sale of employer securities to an S corporation-sponsored employee stock ownership plan (ESOP); and (2) allow a tax deduction for 50% of the interest incurred on loans to S corporation-sponsored ESOPs for the purchase of employer securities, the Department of the Treasury must establish the S Corporation Employee Ownership Assistance Office to foster increased employee ownership of S corporations, and this bill also amends the Small Business Act to define "ESOP business concern" and allow such a concern to continue to qualify for loans, preferences, and other programs under such Act.
- ***Small Business Employee Ownership Promotion Enhancement Act [Draft]***: Promotes the establishment and creation of employee stock ownership plans.

A Strong, Secure Infrastructure

Transportation:

Investing in our roads, bridges, railways and airports is an investment in our nation, its economy and our families.

- ***Move America Act of 2017 [H.R.3912]***: Amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow tax-exempt Move America bonds and tax credits to be used for certain infrastructure projects. A Move America bond is treated as a tax-exempt private facility bond with certain exceptions. At least 95% of the net proceeds from the issuance of the bond must be used for infrastructure projects, including: airports; docks and wharves; mass commuting facilities; railroads; certain

surface transportation projects eligible for federal assistance, projects for an international bridge or tunnel, or facilities for transferring freight from truck to rail or rail to truck; and more.

Information Technology:

In their [2015 Year-End Economic Report](#), the National Small Business Association noted that “42 percent of small businesses report they have been the victim of a cyber-attack.” The average loss to a business whose banking account was compromised by a cyberattack was more than \$32,000. Under the legislation, small businesses are defined as those who have 100 or fewer employees.

As a member of the both the Small Business Committee and the Homeland Security Committee’s Subcommittee on Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Protection, I understand that cybersecurity is a complex and serious national and economic security issue that our country will continue face over the decades to come. As such, we need to act now to ensure we’re protecting our nation’s infrastructure and businesses.

- ***Small Business Cybersecurity Enhancement Act [H.R.3968]:*** Creates a loan guarantee program that would allow small businesses to acquire cybersecurity technology and services.

Energy:

Whether it is state actors from North Korea to Russia, hacktivists or terror groups, cyber-security – especially when it comes to infrastructure like our electric grid - is a complex and serious national and economic security issue that our country will continue face over the decades to come.

- ***Securing the Electric Grid to Protect Military Readiness Act of 2017[H.R. 3855]:*** Requires a report from the Departments of Defense, Energy, and Homeland Security, and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence on significant security risks to the national electric grid, the potential effect of such security risks on the readiness of the United States Armed Forces, and recommendations for mitigating those threats.

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