

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1040

To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide taxpayers a flat tax alternative to the current income tax system.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 15, 2021

Mr. BURGESS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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## A BILL

To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide taxpayers a flat tax alternative to the current income tax system.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Flat Tax Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. THE FLAT TAX.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter A of chapter 1 of the  
7 Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting  
8 after part VII the following new part:

1 **“PART VIII—THE FLAT TAX**

“Sec. 60. Irrevocable election to be subject to flat tax.

“Sec. 60A. Tax imposed on individuals.

“Sec. 60B. Tax imposed on business activities.

“Sec. 60C. Tax on noncash compensation provided to employees not engaged in business activity.

2 **“SEC. 60. IRREVOCABLE ELECTION TO BE SUBJECT TO**  
 3 **FLAT TAX.**

4 “(a) INDIVIDUAL.—

5 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-  
 6 graph (2), in lieu of the tax imposed by sections 1  
 7 (relating to tax imposed) and 55 (relating to alter-  
 8 native minimum tax imposed), under regulations  
 9 prescribed by the Secretary, an individual may make  
 10 an irrevocable election to be subject to the tax im-  
 11 posed by this part.

12 “(2) INNOCENT SPOUSE EXCEPTION.—An indi-  
 13 vidual who has made an election under paragraph  
 14 (1) and who subsequently obtains relief of liability  
 15 for tax under section 6015(b) may, not later than 1  
 16 year after the date such relief is granted, revoke the  
 17 election made under paragraph (1).

18 “(b) PERSON ENGAGED IN BUSINESS ACTIVITY.—In  
 19 lieu of the tax imposed by sections 11 (relating to tax im-  
 20 posed) and 55 (relating to alternative minimum tax im-  
 21 posed), under regulations prescribed by the Secretary, a  
 22 person engaged in business activity may make an irrev-

1 ovable election to be subject to the tax imposed by this  
2 part.

3 “(c) **DISALLOWANCE OF CREDITS.**—No credit shall  
4 be allowed under this chapter for any taxable year to any  
5 person with respect to whom an election under subsection  
6 (a) or (b) is in effect.

7 **“SEC. 60A. TAX IMPOSED ON INDIVIDUALS.**

8 “(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There is hereby imposed on the  
9 taxable income of every individual who makes an election  
10 to be subject to this part a tax equal to—

11 “(1) 19 percent of the taxable income of such  
12 individual for such taxable year in the case of the  
13 first 2 taxable years of the individual beginning with  
14 the taxable year for which the election is made, and

15 “(2) 17 percent of the taxable income of such  
16 individual for such taxable year in the case of all  
17 taxable years subsequent to the taxable years de-  
18 scribed in paragraph (1).

19 “(b) **TAXABLE INCOME.**—For purposes of this part,  
20 the term ‘taxable income’ means the excess of—

21 “(1) the sum of—

22 “(A) wages (as defined in section 3121(a)  
23 without regard to paragraph (1) thereof) which  
24 are paid in cash and which are received during

1 the taxable year for services performed in the  
2 United States,

3 “(B) retirement distributions which are in-  
4 cludible in gross income for such taxable year,  
5 plus

6 “(C) amounts received under any law of  
7 the United States or of any State which is in  
8 the nature of unemployment compensation, over  
9 “(2) the standard deduction.

10 “(c) STANDARD DEDUCTION.—For purposes of this  
11 part—

12 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘standard deduc-  
13 tion’ means the sum of—

14 “(A) the basic standard deduction, plus

15 “(B) the additional standard deduction.

16 “(2) BASIC STANDARD DEDUCTION.—For pur-  
17 poses of paragraph (1), the basic standard deduction  
18 is—

19 “(A) \$32,496 in the case of—

20 “(i) a joint return, or

21 “(ii) a surviving spouse (as defined in  
22 section 2(a)),

23 “(B) \$20,739 in the case of a head of  
24 household (as defined in section 2(b)), and

1           “(C) \$16,248 in the case of an indi-  
2           vidual—

3                   “(i) who is not married and who is  
4                   not a surviving spouse or head of house-  
5                   hold, or

6                   “(ii) who is a married individual filing  
7                   a separate return.

8           “(3) ADDITIONAL STANDARD DEDUCTION.—For  
9           purposes of paragraph (1), the additional standard  
10          deduction is \$6,998 for each dependent (as defined  
11          in section 152) who is a qualifying child (as defined  
12          in section 152(c)(1)) for the taxable year and who  
13          is not required to file a return for such taxable year.

14          “(d) RETIREMENT DISTRIBUTIONS.—For purposes  
15          of this section, the term ‘retirement distribution’ means  
16          any distribution from—

17                   “(1) a plan described in section 401(a) which  
18                   includes a trust exempt from tax under section  
19                   501(a),

20                   “(2) an annuity plan described in section  
21                   403(a),

22                   “(3) an annuity contract described in section  
23                   403(b),

24                   “(4) an individual retirement account described  
25                   in section 408(a),

1           “(5) an individual retirement annuity described  
2           in section 408(b),

3           “(6) an eligible deferred compensation plan (as  
4           defined in section 457),

5           “(7) a governmental plan (as defined in section  
6           414(d)), or

7           “(8) a trust described in section 501(c)(18).

8           Such term includes any plan, contract, account, annuity,  
9           or trust which, at any time, has been determined by the  
10          Secretary to be such a plan, contract, account, annuity,  
11          or trust.

12          “(e) INCOME OF CERTAIN CHILDREN.—For purposes  
13          of this part—

14                 “(1) an individual’s taxable income shall include  
15                 the taxable income of each dependent child of such  
16                 individual who has not attained age 14 as of the  
17                 close of such taxable year, and

18                 “(2) such dependent child shall have no liability  
19                 for tax imposed by this section with respect to such  
20                 income and shall not be required to file a return for  
21                 such taxable year.

22          “(f) INFLATION ADJUSTMENT.—

23                 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any taxable  
24                 year beginning in a calendar year after 2021, each  
25                 dollar amount contained in subsection (c) shall be

1 increased by an amount determined by the Secretary  
2 to be equal to—

3 “(A) such dollar amount, multiplied by

4 “(B) the cost-of-living adjustment for such  
5 calendar year.

6 “(2) COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT.—For pur-  
7 poses of paragraph (1), the cost-of-living adjustment  
8 for any calendar year is the percentage (if any) by  
9 which—

10 “(A) the CPI for the preceding calendar  
11 year, exceeds

12 “(B) the CPI for the calendar year 2020.

13 “(3) CPI FOR ANY CALENDAR YEAR.—For pur-  
14 poses of paragraph (2), the CPI for any calendar  
15 year is the average of the Consumer Price Index as  
16 of the close of the 12-month period ending on Au-  
17 gust 31 of such calendar year.

18 “(4) CONSUMER PRICE INDEX.—For purposes  
19 of paragraph (3), the term ‘Consumer Price Index’  
20 means the last Consumer Price Index for all urban  
21 consumers published by the Department of Labor.  
22 For purposes of the preceding sentence, the revision  
23 of the Consumer Price Index which is most con-  
24 sistent with the Consumer Price Index for calendar  
25 year 1986 shall be used.

1           “(5) ROUNDING.—If any increase determined  
2           under paragraph (1) is not a multiple of \$10, such  
3           increase shall be rounded to the next highest mul-  
4           tiple of \$10.

5           “(g) MARITAL STATUS.—For purposes of this sec-  
6           tion, marital status shall be determined under section  
7           7703.

8           **“SEC. 60B. TAX IMPOSED ON BUSINESS ACTIVITIES.**

9           “(a) TAX IMPOSED.—There is hereby imposed on  
10          every person engaged in a business activity who makes an  
11          election to be taxed under this part a tax equal to—

12               “(1) 19 percent of the business taxable income  
13               of such person for such taxable year in the case of  
14               the first 2 taxable years of the person beginning  
15               with the taxable year for which the election is made,  
16               and

17               “(2) 17 percent of the business taxable income  
18               of such person for such taxable year in the case of  
19               all taxable years subsequent to the taxable years de-  
20               scribed in paragraph (1).

21          “(b) LIABILITY FOR TAX.—The tax imposed by this  
22          section shall be paid by the person engaged in the business  
23          activity, whether such person is an individual, partnership,  
24          corporation, or otherwise.



1       “(c) BUSINESS TAXABLE INCOME.—For purposes of  
2 this section—

3           “(1) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘business taxable  
4 income’ means gross active income reduced by the  
5 deductions specified in subsection (d).

6           “(2) GROSS ACTIVE INCOME.—

7               “(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of para-  
8 graph (1), the term ‘gross active income’ means  
9 gross receipts from—

10                   “(i) the sale or exchange of property  
11 or services in the United States by any  
12 person in connection with a business activ-  
13 ity, and

14                   “(ii) the export of property or services  
15 from the United States in connection with  
16 a business activity.

17           “(B) EXCHANGES.—For purposes of this  
18 section, the amount treated as gross receipts  
19 from the exchange of property or services is the  
20 fair market value of the property or services re-  
21 ceived, plus any money received.

22           “(C) COORDINATION WITH SPECIAL RULES  
23 FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES, ETC.—Except as  
24 provided in subsection (e)—

1                   “(i) the term ‘property’ does not in-  
2                   clude money or any financial instrument,  
3                   and

4                   “(ii) the term ‘services’ does not in-  
5                   clude financial services.

6                   “(3) EXEMPTION FROM TAX FOR ACTIVITIES OF  
7                   GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES AND TAX-EXEMPT ORGA-  
8                   NIZATIONS.—For purposes of this section, the term  
9                   ‘business activity’ does not include any activity of a  
10                  governmental entity or of any other organization  
11                  which is exempt from tax under this chapter.

12                  “(d) DEDUCTIONS.—

13                  “(1) IN GENERAL.—The deductions specified in  
14                  this subsection are—

15                  “(A) the cost of business inputs for the  
16                  business activity,

17                  “(B) wages (as defined in section 3121(a)  
18                  without regard to paragraph (1) thereof) which  
19                  are paid in cash for services performed in the  
20                  United States as an employee, and

21                  “(C) retirement contributions to or under  
22                  any plan or arrangement which makes retire-  
23                  ment distributions (as defined in section  
24                  60A(d)) for the benefit of such employees to the

1 extent such contributions are allowed as a de-  
2 duction under section 404.

3 “(2) BUSINESS INPUTS.—

4 “(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of para-  
5 graph (1), the term ‘cost of business inputs’  
6 means—

7 “(i) the amount paid for property sold  
8 or used in connection with a business ac-  
9 tivity,

10 “(ii) the amount paid for services  
11 (other than for the services of employees,  
12 including fringe benefits paid by reason of  
13 such services) in connection with a busi-  
14 ness activity, and

15 “(iii) any excise tax, sales tax, cus-  
16 toms duty, or other separately stated levy  
17 imposed by a Federal, State, or local gov-  
18 ernment on the purchase of property or  
19 services which are for use in connection  
20 with a business activity.

21 Such term shall not include any tax imposed by  
22 chapter 2 or 21.

23 “(B) EXCEPTIONS.—Such term shall not  
24 include—

1           “(i) items described in subparagraphs  
2           (B) and (C) of paragraph (1), and

3           “(ii) items for personal use not in  
4           connection with any business activity.

5           “(C) EXCHANGES.—For purposes of this  
6           section, the amount treated as paid in connec-  
7           tion with the exchange of property or services  
8           is the fair market value of the property or serv-  
9           ices exchanged, plus any money paid.

10          “(e) SPECIAL RULES FOR FINANCIAL INTERMEDI-  
11          ATION SERVICE ACTIVITIES.—In the case of the business  
12          activity of providing financial intermediation services, the  
13          taxable income from such activity shall be equal to the  
14          value of the intermediation services provided in such activ-  
15          ity.

16          “(f) EXCEPTION FOR SERVICES PERFORMED AS EM-  
17          PLOYEE.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘business  
18          activity’ does not include the performance of services by  
19          an employee for the employee’s employer.

20          “(g) CARRYOVER OF CREDIT-EQUIVALENT OF EX-  
21          CESS DEDUCTIONS.—

22                 “(1) IN GENERAL.—If the aggregate deductions  
23                 for any taxable year exceed the gross active income  
24                 for such taxable year, the credit-equivalent of such  
25                 excess shall be allowed as a credit against the tax

1 imposed by this section for the following taxable  
2 year.

3 “(2) CREDIT-EQUIVALENT OF EXCESS DEDUC-  
4 TIONS.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the credit-  
5 equivalent of the excess described in paragraph (1)  
6 for any taxable year is an amount equal to—

7 “(A) the sum of—

8 “(i) such excess, plus

9 “(ii) the product of such excess and  
10 the 3-month Treasury rate for the last  
11 month of such taxable year, multiplied by

12 “(B) the rate of the tax imposed by sub-  
13 section (a) for such taxable year.

14 “(3) CARRYOVER OF UNUSED CREDIT.—If the  
15 credit allowable for any taxable year by reason of  
16 this subsection exceeds the tax imposed by this sec-  
17 tion for such year, then (in lieu of treating such ex-  
18 cess as an overpayment) the sum of—

19 “(A) such excess, plus

20 “(B) the product of such excess and the 3-  
21 month Treasury rate for the last month of such  
22 taxable year,

23 shall be allowed as a credit against the tax imposed  
24 by this section for the following taxable year.

1           “(4) 3-MONTH TREASURY RATE.—For purposes  
2 of this subsection, the 3-month Treasury rate is the  
3 rate determined by the Secretary based on the aver-  
4 age market yield (during any 1-month period se-  
5 lected by the Secretary and ending in the calendar  
6 month in which the determination is made) on out-  
7 standing marketable obligations of the United States  
8 with remaining periods to maturity of 3 months or  
9 less.

10 **“SEC. 60C. TAX ON NONCASH COMPENSATION PROVIDED**  
11 **TO EMPLOYEES NOT ENGAGED IN BUSINESS**  
12 **ACTIVITY.**

13           “(a) IMPOSITION OF TAX.—There is hereby imposed  
14 on every employer of an employee to whom this section  
15 applies and who makes an election to be taxed under this  
16 part a tax equal to—

17           “(1) 19 percent of the value of excludable com-  
18 pensation provided during the calendar year by the  
19 employer for the benefit of employees to whom this  
20 section applies in the case of the first 2 calendar  
21 years beginning with the calendar year for which the  
22 election under section 60 is made, and

23           “(2) 17 percent of such excludable compensa-  
24 tion during the calendar year in the case of all cal-

1       endar years subsequent to the calendar years de-  
2       scribed in paragraph (1).

3       “(b) LIABILITY FOR TAX.—The tax imposed by this  
4       section shall be paid by the employer.

5       “(c) EXCLUDABLE COMPENSATION.—For purposes  
6       of subsection (a), the term ‘excludable compensation’  
7       means any remuneration for services performed as an em-  
8       ployee other than—

9               “(1) wages (as defined in section 3121(a) with-  
10       out regard to paragraph (1) thereof) which are paid  
11       in cash,

12              “(2) remuneration for services performed out-  
13       side the United States, and

14              “(3) retirement contributions to or under any  
15       plan or arrangement which makes retirement dis-  
16       tributions (as defined in section 60A(d)).

17       “(d) EMPLOYEES TO WHOM SECTION APPLIES.—  
18       This section shall apply to an employee who is employed  
19       in any activity by—

20              “(1) any organization which is exempt from  
21       taxation under this chapter, or

22              “(2) any agency or instrumentality of the  
23       United States, any State or political subdivision of  
24       a State, or the District of Columbia.”.

1 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of parts for  
 2 subchapter A of chapter 1 of such Code is amended by  
 3 adding at the end the following new item:

“PART VIII. THE FLAT TAX”.

4 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by  
 5 this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after  
 6 December 31, 2020.

7 **SEC. 3. REPEAL OF ESTATE AND GIFT TAXES.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle B of the Internal Rev-  
 9 enue Code of 1986 is hereby repealed.

10 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The repeal made by sub-  
 11 section (a) shall apply to the estates of decedents dying,  
 12 and gifts and generation-skipping transfers made, after  
 13 December 31, 2020.

14 (c) CROSS REFERENCE.—See section 102 of the In-  
 15 ternal Revenue Code of 1986 for exclusion of gifts and  
 16 inheritances from gross income.

17 **SEC. 4. SUPERMAJORITY REQUIRED TO CONSIDER REV-**  
 18 **ENUE MEASURE.**

19 A bill, joint resolution, amendment to a bill or joint  
 20 resolution, or conference report that—

21 (1) includes an increase in the rates of tax  
 22 specified in section 60A(a) or 60B(a) of the Internal  
 23 Revenue Code of 1986 (as amended by this Act), or

24 (2) reduces the standard deduction, as defined  
 25 in section 60A(c) of such Code (as so amended), or



1       the deductions specified in section 60B(d) of such  
2       Code (as so amended),  
3 may not be considered as passed or agreed to by the  
4 House of Representatives or the Senate unless so deter-  
5 mined by a vote of not less than two-thirds of the Members  
6 of the House of Representatives or the Senate (as the case  
7 may be) voting, a quorum being present.

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