

Despite voting for over a trillion in new taxes, Vicente Gonzalez improperly paid his own taxes for eight years, claiming an exemption he was ineligible for to avoid paying his fair share of taxes.

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- **On November 19, 2021, Gonzalez voted for H.R. 5376, the Build Back Better Act.** (H.R. 5376, [Roll Call 385](#), Passed 220-213: R 0-212, D 220-1, Gonzalez Voted Yea, 11/19/21)

Build Back Better could lead to about \$1 trillion in tax hikes on American workers and businesses, force middle class Americans to shoulder the burden of new corporate taxes, and result in one of the highest tax rate in the developed world:

- **Build Back Better could lead to \$530 billion in tax hikes on American workers and \$470 billion in tax hikes on corporations.** “On a conventional basis, the House bill would raise about \$1 trillion in federal revenue from 2022 to 2031. The bill includes about \$1.7 trillion in gross revenue raisers, composed of about \$470 billion in corporate tax increases, \$530 billion in individual tax increases, \$148 billion net from additional IRS tax enforcement, \$340 billion from the drug pricing provisions, and about \$177 billion in net revenue from Ways & Means items scored by the Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) and Congressional Budget Office (CBO).” (Alex Durante, Cody Kallen, Huaqun Li, William McBride, Alex Muresianu, Erica York, Garrett Watson, “House Build Back Better Act: Details & Analysis of Tax Provisions in the Budget Reconciliation Bill,” [Tax Foundation](#), 12/2/21)
 - **The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget determined that the increase in corporate taxes would result in an indirect tax burden for “some percentage of households in every income group.”** “By comparison, only about one-third of those in the top 1 percent of earners and one-fifth of those within the 95th and 99th income percentiles would face a higher tax burden. While the bill does not directly increase taxes on anyone earning less than \$400,000 per year, some percentage of households in every income group would end up with higher *indirect* tax burdens because of higher corporate taxes. TPC and other estimators believe corporate tax increases ultimately flow through to retirement accounts, wages, and other sources of income across the income spectrum.” (Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, “Two-Thirds of the ‘One Percent’ Get a Tax Cut Under Build Back Better, Due to SALT Relief,” [Blog](#), 12/10/21)
 - **The National Federation of Independent Business determined that the Build Back Better Act would hit small businesses with “significant tax increases, inflexible mandates, and unaffordable penalties.”** ““By passing the Build Back Better Act, the U.S. House has proposed saddling small businesses with significant tax increases, inflexible mandates, and unaffordable penalties,” said Kevin Kuhlman, NFIB Vice President of Federal Government Relations. ‘Small businesses are facing numerous challenges right now, including the inflation tax, supply chain disruptions, worker shortages, and COVID-19 variants and restrictions. These additional burdens will severely hurt small businesses across the

country, threaten the small business recovery, and punish Main Street.” (National Federation of Independent Business, “NFIB: House’s Build Back Better Act Would Harm Small Business Recovery,” [Press Release](#), 11/19/21)

- **Build Back Better would result in one of the highest income tax rate in the developed world.** “Under the latest iteration of the House Build Back Better Act (BBBA), the average top tax rate on personal income would reach 57.4 percent, giving the U.S. the highest rate in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). All 50 states plus the District of Columbia would have top tax rates on personal income exceeding 50 percent.” (Alex Durante and William McBride, “Top Tax Rate on Personal Income Would Be Highest in OECD under New Build Back Better Framework,” [Tax Foundation](#), 11/1/21)

The Build Back Better Act, as passed by the House on November 19, 2021, imposes a natural gas tax, or methane fee, that could raise costs for American consumers, and cost the American economy as much as \$9.1 billion and as many as 90,000 jobs:

- **The Build Back Better Act would introduce a methane fee that could raise costs for consumers.** “Buried inside the ‘Build Back Better’ plan that cleared the House of Representatives on Friday morning is a new tax on natural gas production that will likely translate into higher heating bills for American households. The new tax is aimed at curbing methane emissions and will apply fees to companies that produce, process, transmit or store oil and natural gas starting in 2023. The specific fees will depend on where the natural gas is produced and will vary depending on how much methane is released into the atmosphere during the process. Overall, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that the new ‘methane fee’ will generate about \$8 billion over the next 10 years. The natural gas industry says that money will end up coming directly out of consumers’ wallets.” (Eric Boehm, “House-Passed ‘Build Back Better’ Plan Aims To Curb Methane Emissions by Hiking Heating Prices,” [Reason](#), 11/19/21)
- **Per the American Petroleum Institute, the methane tax included in the Build Back Better Act could cost the economy as much as “\$9.1 billion and as many as 90,000 jobs.”** “Perhaps most importantly, the tax in the House Energy and Commerce bill will generate significant costs and loss of jobs. The methane tax is a tax on oil and natural gas which could have harmful impacts on America’s economy and jobs. At \$1,500 a ton, the potential cost of the bill’s methane fee to the economy could be as high as \$9.1 billion and as many as 90,000 jobs could be lost.” (American Petroleum Institute, “[Methane Fee Opposition Letter](#),” 9/12/21)
 - **The House approved Build Back Better Act included a fee reaching \$1,500 per ton on methane as of 2025.** “Language approved by the House represents a compromise that would slap a rising fee on excess emissions at oil and gas facilities, reaching \$1,500 per ton in 2025, along with \$775 million in subsidies for companies that take steps to reduce emissions.” (Matthew Daly, “Dems confident on methane fee as budget bill moves to Senate,” [AP News](#), 11/22/21)

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- **A coalition of energy industries determined that “new fees or taxes on energy companies will raise costs for consumers,” specifically creating a burden for lower-income Americans.** “New fees or taxes on energy companies will raise costs for customers, creating a burden that will fall most heavily on lower-income Americans,’ a coalition of energy industries wrote in a letter to congressional leaders in September. ‘These major new costs most likely will result in higher bills for natural gas customers, including families, small businesses, and power generators.’” (Eric Boehm, “House-Passed ‘Build Back Better’ Plan Aims To Curb Methane Emissions by Hiking Heating Prices,” [Reason](#), 11/19/21)

The House passed methane fee has been labelled a “stealth tax” that would impact over 180 million Americans and 5.5 million businesses:

- **The House passed methane fee has been labeled as a “stealth tax on natural gas and everyone who uses it.”** “It could be a rough winter for energy prices across the U.S., and the Democratic spending plan will make it worse. The House passed what it calls a ‘fee’ on methane that amounts to a stealth tax on natural gas and everyone who uses it.” (Wall Street Journal Editorial Board, “The Stealth Gas-Heating Tax,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 12/9/21)
- **The tax on natural gas could be passed along to the “180 million Americans [who] use natural gas to heat homes and run appliances” and the “5.5 million businesses [that] use it to run their workplaces and manufacturing facilities.”** “Producers will naturally pass the cost of the tax along to customers. Some 180 million Americans use natural gas to heat homes and run appliances, while some 5.5 million businesses use it to run their workplaces and manufacturing facilities.” (Wall Street Journal Editorial Board, “The Stealth Gas-Heating Tax,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 12/9/21)

Vicente Gonzalez voted for the Inflation Reduction Act, that authorizes nearly \$740 billion of new taxes:

- **In August 2022, Vicente Gonzalez voted to concur with a Senate amendment and pass H.R. 5376, the Inflation Reduction Act.** (H.R. 5376, [Roll Call #420](#), Passed 220-207: R 0-207, D 220-0, V. Gonzalez Voted Yea, 8/12/22)
- **The Inflation Reduction Act authorized close to \$740 billion of new taxes over the next ten years.** “Democrats say the legislation will raise close to \$740 billion in tax revenue over the next 10 years and devote \$300 billion of that money toward reducing the federal deficit.” (Kemberly Washington, “Will The Inflation Reduction Act Raise Your Taxes,” [Forbes](#), 8/16/2022)
 - ***Axios HEADLINE: “Biden signs Democrats’ \$740 billion tax, climate and health care bill into law”*** (Shawna Chen, “Biden signs Democrats’ \$740 billion tax, climate and health care bill into law,” [Axios](#), updated 8/16/2022)

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The Inflation Reduction Act could generate more than \$19 billion annually, excluding the effect of Affordable Care Act subsidies:

- According to the Congressional Joint Committee on Taxation, the Inflation Reduction Act could generate nearly \$10.6 billion in tax revenues from earners making as much as \$200,000 and generate more than \$8 billion in tax revenues from earners making between \$200,000 and \$500,000, excluding the effect of Affordable Care Act subsidies.

Income Category	Change in Federal Taxes (in Millions)
Less than \$10,000	\$88
\$10,000 to \$20,000	\$83
\$20,000 to \$30,000	\$155
\$30,000 to \$40,000	\$259
\$40,000 to \$50,000	\$351
\$50,000 to \$75,000	\$1,222
\$75,000 to \$100,000	\$1,577
\$100,000 to \$200,000	\$6,833
Subtotal:	\$10,568
\$200,000 to \$500,000	\$8,741
Total:	\$19,309

(Joint Committee on Taxation, "Distributional Effects Of Selected Provisions From Subtitle A And Subtitle D Of Title I - Committee On Finance Of An Amendment In The Nature Of A Substitute To H.R. 5376," [House Budget Committee Republicans](#), 8/10/22)

Editor's Note: According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the median household income in the U.S. was \$67,521 in 2020.

The Texas Tribune published an article in August 2022 on how Vicente Gonzalez and his wife improperly paid their property taxes for eight years by claiming two homestead exemptions:

- Vicente Gonzalez and his wife improperly paid their property taxes for at least eight years by claiming homestead exemptions on two properties they separately owned. "U.S.

Rep. Vicente Gonzalez, D-McAllen, and his wife ran afoul of property tax law for at least eight years as each claimed homestead exemptions on properties they separately owned.” (Patrick Svitek, “U.S. Rep. Vicente Gonzalez and his wife defied property tax law for eight years by claiming two homestead exemptions,” [The Texas Tribune](#), 8/19/2022)

- **From 2014 to 2021, Gonzalez claimed a homestead exemption on his McAllen property valued at over \$500,000, while at the same time his wife was also claiming a homestead exemption at a property she owned in McAllen that was worth almost \$300,000.** “But from 2014 to 2021, Hidalgo County records show that Vicente Gonzalez was claiming a homestead exemption on a property in McAllen valued this year at \$527,054, while his wife was also claiming one on another property in the city valued this year at \$287,131.” (Patrick Svitek, “U.S. Rep. Vicente Gonzalez and his wife defied property tax law for eight years by claiming two homestead exemptions,” [The Texas Tribune](#), 8/19/2022)
 - **This double homestead exemption saved the couple at least \$2,300 in property taxes on the second (wife’s) property, according to the Tribune’s analysis.** “That saved them at least \$2,300 in property taxes on the second property, according to a Texas Tribune analysis.” (Patrick Svitek, “U.S. Rep. Vicente Gonzalez and his wife defied property tax law for eight years by claiming two homestead exemptions,” [The Texas Tribune](#), 8/19/2022)
- **Married couples in Texas generally can only claim the homestead exemption on one property and usually cannot be applied to second homes or commercial/income properties.** “In Texas, married couples generally can claim only one such exemption, which is meant to provide some tax relief on properties considered “principal residences.” Homestead exemptions cannot typically be claimed on commercial properties, second homes or income properties.” (Patrick Svitek, “U.S. Rep. Vicente Gonzalez and his wife defied property tax law for eight years by claiming two homestead exemptions,” [The Texas Tribune](#), 8/19/2022)
- **Gonzalez claimed that his wife’s property was in her possession since before their 2008 marriage and that she “forgot” to take off the exemption.** “Gonzalez said the second property is one that his wife owned prior to their marriage in 2008 and that she forgot to remove the homestead exemption on it until last year.” (Patrick Svitek, “U.S. Rep. Vicente Gonzalez and his wife defied property tax law for eight years by claiming two homestead exemptions,” [The Texas Tribune](#), 8/19/2022)
- **A spokesperson for Gonzalez said he would pay back any taxes he owed.** “After the Tribune inquired, Gonzalez spokesperson James Rivera said the congressman has spoken with the county appraiser’s office and intends to pay any back taxes that are owed.” (Patrick Svitek, “U.S. Rep. Vicente Gonzalez and his wife defied property tax law for eight years by claiming two homestead exemptions,” [The Texas Tribune](#), 8/19/2022)

Editor’s Note: A Hidalgo County property search for his wife’s [property](#) shows that there are currently (9/21/2022) no taxes due on it.

- **An application to file for a homestead exemption includes a warning that making a false statement could be a Class A misdemeanor or a state jail felony.** “The application for a homestead exemption in Hidalgo County tells applicants they are eligible only if ‘you and

your spouse do not claim a residence homestead exemption on any other property.’ The application warns that anyone who makes a false statement on the application ‘could be found guilty of a Class A misdemeanor or a state jail felony.’” (Patrick Svitek, “U.S. Rep. Vicente Gonzalez and his wife defied property tax law for eight years by claiming two homestead exemptions,” [The Texas Tribune](#), 8/19/2022)

- **“Property-tax experts agreed that the Gonzalezes’ situation was problematic, but not unheard of.”** “Property-tax experts agreed that the Gonzalezes’ situation was problematic, but not unheard of. ‘Typically one family, one homestead,’ said Dale Craymer, president of the Texas Taxpayers and Research Association, speaking generally about the law. ‘Married couples may only claim one homestead exemption, which must be on their principal residence,’ said James Quintero of the Texas Public Policy Foundation, a conservative think tank based in Austin. ‘To do otherwise likely violates the spirit of the law, if not the letter of the law.’” (Patrick Svitek, “U.S. Rep. Vicente Gonzalez and his wife defied property tax law for eight years by claiming two homestead exemptions,” [The Texas Tribune](#), 8/19/2022)