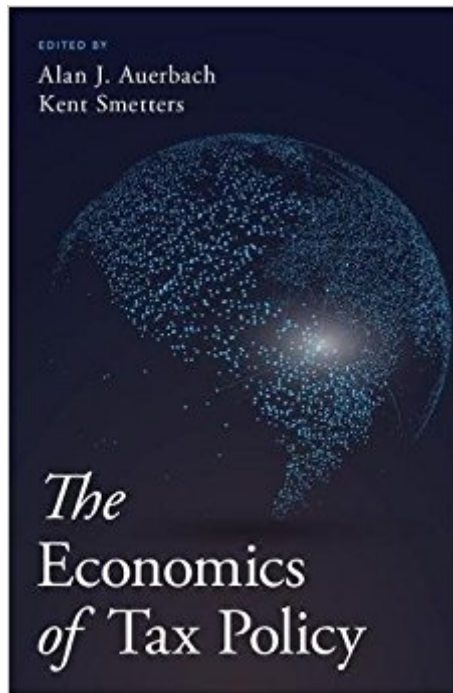




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The Economics Of Tax Policy



Synopsis

The debates about the what, who, and how of tax policy are at the core of politics, policy, and economics. The Economics of Tax Policy provides a straightforward overview of recent research in the economics of taxation. Tax policies generate considerable debate among the public, policymakers, and scholars. These disputes have grown more heated in the United States as the incomes of the wealthiest 1 percent and the rest of the population continue to diverge. This important volume enhances understanding of the implications of taxation on behavior and social outcomes by having leading scholars evaluate key topics in tax policy. These include how changes to the individual income tax affect long-term economic growth; the challenges of tax administration, compliance, and enforcement; and environmental taxation and its effects on tax revenue, pollution emissions, economic efficiency, and income distribution. Also explored are tax expenditures, which are subsidy programs in the form of tax deductions, exclusions, credits, or favorable rates; how college attendance is influenced by tax credits and deductions for tuition and fees, tax-advantaged college savings plans, and student loan interest deductions; and how tax policy toward low-income families takes a number of forms with different distributional effects. Among the most contentious issues explored are influences of capital gains and estate taxation on the long term concentration of wealth; the interaction of tax policy and retirement savings and how policy can "nudge" improved planning for retirement; and how the reform of corporate and business taxation is central to current tax policy debates in the United States. By providing overviews of recent advances in thinking about how taxes relate to behavior and social goals, The Economics of Tax Policy helps inform the debate.

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"Tax policy influences everything from higher education to retirement savings and the environment. If you're a practicing economist and want a single comprehensive volume that reflects the most recent research on the economics of tax policy, this is the book for you. And if you're not an economist, the book provides a user-friendly tour of the tax policy debate in all its manifestations. Auerbach and Smetters have pulled off a tough task: a tax book that is rigorous, relevant, and readable." -- Peter Orszag, Vice Chairman of Investment Banking at Lazard and former OMB and CBO Director

"Alan Auerbach and Kent Smetters have assembled an all-star cast whose new analyses are timely. Particularly promising avenues in the book are corporate tax reform and a shift to consumption taxation. Especially with tax reform a higher priority now in Washington, this book is a must-read for economists, policymakers, and business leaders interested in tax policy and its effects." -- Glenn Hubbard, Dean and Russell L. Carson Professor of Finance and Economics, Columbia Business School; and former Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers

"Alan Auerbach and Kent Smetters have done the tax policy community a great service. The Economics of Tax Policy is a must-read for anyone serious about the U.S. tax system and an extremely timely contribution to the debate over fundamental tax reform." -- Doug Holtz-Eakin, President, American Action Forum

"This volume provides high quality analyses of the key tax reform issues by a range of expert economists. Anyone interested in where the U.S. tax system needs to go should read these papers." -- Martin Feldstein, Professor of Economics, Harvard University

"Getting taxes right is of great importance for America's economic growth and competitiveness. The Economics of Tax Policy provides a far-reaching and pragmatic analysis of the principles that should guide decisions and choices that influence such key issues as the environment, enforcement, education, and retirement. It can and should inform the discussion on tax reform." -- Austan D. Goolsbee, Robert P. Gwinn Professor of Economics, The University of Chicago Booth School of Business

Alan Auerbach is the Robert D. Burch Professor of Economics and Law and Director of the Robert D. Burch Center for Tax Policy and Public Finance at the University of California, Berkeley. He is also a Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research and served as Deputy Chief of Staff of the US Joint Committee on Taxation (1992). Kent Smetters is the Boettner Chair Professor at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and a Faculty Research Fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research. Previous policy positions include the Congressional Budget

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