

Use April's Recess to Set the Agenda Face-to-Face with Members of Congress

RESULTS volunteers have been working hard to [Set the Agenda](#) with the new Congress by meeting with them face-to-face over the first few months of the year. This month's two-week congressional recess is the perfect opportunity for you to meet with them before our [Set the Agenda](#) campaign ends. Here again are the campaign goals:

- Meet with each congressional office you or your group covers
- Have at least one of those meetings be face-to-face with your senator or representative
- Invite at least one new person to attend a meeting with you

It is critical that we push Congress to prioritize access to affordable housing while building momentum to close the racial wealth divide. RESULTS Kentucky volunteer Maureen Bowling's story on the [RESULTS Blog](#) is an important reminder that members of Congress must not be content with the status quo; we need to expand access to housing assistance so that the millions more families can get help putting a roof over their heads. Only one in four households eligible for federal housing assistance can get it, but an increase of \$5 billion in housing assistance would help 340,000 new households get Housing Choice Vouchers ("Section 8") over two years.

Request a Face-to-Face Meeting

Congress is on recess April 15-26. Meet with representatives and senators in person to talk about the importance of affordable housing.

1. **Have the point persons for your representative(s) and senators call the schedulers to request face-to-face meetings for the April recess.** Find names and contact information for the Washington DC scheduler (under "Staff") on our [Elected Officials page](#) (or call the Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121).
2. **Use our [online template](#)** as a script or the body of an e-mail to request the meeting. If you've already put in a request but haven't gotten a meeting confirmed, see some great tips for following up from our [April U.S. Poverty National Webinar](#).
3. **Be sure to also ask about town halls or public events** your members of Congress may be having during the recess (also check www.townhallproject.com).
4. Be sure to **note the name of the scheduler and thank him/her** for their assistance. If you don't get a firm answer when you call, mention when you'll be following up.
5. Once you confirm a meeting, **please contact RESULTS Director of US Poverty Campaigns Meredith Dodson** (mdodson@results.org) for coaching and materials.
6. After each meeting (even staff only meetings), **please fill out the [RESULTS Lobby Report Form](#).**

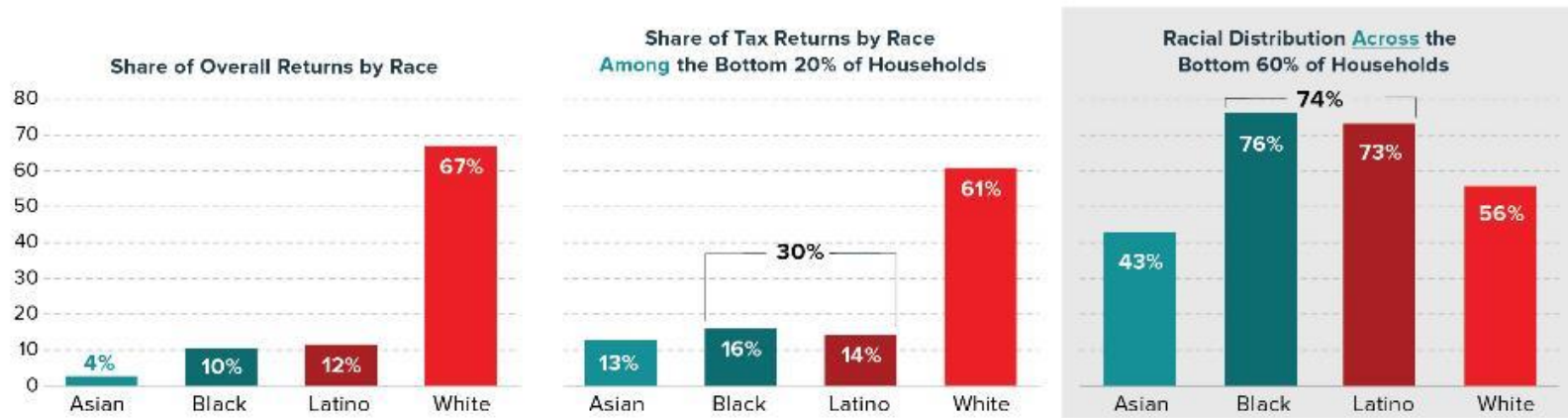
Taxes, Housing, and Racial Equity

With Tax Day approaching, millions of people are already seeing the impact of the 2017 *Tax Cuts and Jobs Act*. The tax code can be notoriously difficult to understand. Yet, taxes are a huge contributor to the racial wealth divide in this country, especially when it comes to housing.

One of the major ways to build wealth in the U.S. – which is important, so families can weather financial storms and ensure upward mobility – is through homeownership. Buying a home is seen as a cornerstone of middle-class life and is incentivized through our tax code. Mortgage interest deductions allow homeowners to deduct the interest on their mortgage on their taxes.

Renters, on the other hand, have no such deduction. Although the [population pool of renters has changed in the few last years](#), with wealthier and whiter households making up a large share of new renters, people of color are still more likely to rent than own their homes. Renters of color are also [more likely than white renters to be extremely low-income](#). Instead of focusing solely on homeownership, which disproportionately benefits white and wealthier households, [policy experts](#) have proposed creating a rental tax credit to balance the scales.

Overall, tax incentives accounted for [\\$729 billion last year](#), a massive federal income support program that rarely gets recognized as such. For years, high-income taxpayers, which are disproportionately white, have built wealth via the tax code while low-income Americans, who are disproportionately people of color, have been excluded. And this imbalance has been farther entrenched with the 2017 *Tax Cuts and Jobs Act*. According to a [report](#) by Prosperity Now, nearly 80 percent of the tax cuts (a staggering \$218 billion) will go to white households who only make up 67 percent of tax payers. See a breakdown of the TCJA benefits below.



SOURCE | Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy's microsimulation model