



Trump Explains His Tax Plan on TV News Programs

Making the rounds of TV news and talk programs on May 8 and 9, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump (shown) explained his tax plan, especially what effect, if any, it would have on wealthy Americans. The interview that received the most attention was Sunday's on ABC's *This Week* program with George Stephanopoulos, during which he talked about whether he wants taxes on the wealthy to go up or down.



Trump also appeared on NBC's *Meet the Press* with host Chuck Todd on Sunday and on CNN's *New Day* with Chris Cuomo on Monday and answered the hosts' questions about his tax plan on both programs.

Stephanopoulos asked Trump about his tax plan early on in the interview, stating:

You said recently again that you believe in raising taxes on the wealthy, including yourself, but your plan gives a massive tax cut to the wealthy. How do you square that?

After Trump said his plan "gives a massive tax cut to everybody," and Stephanopoulos countered, "but more to the wealthy than everyone else," Trump elaborated more:

George. And I'll say this to people, I've said it many times. I make deals. I negotiate. I put out a plan that has a massive, massive tax [cut] bigger than any other candidate. We have to negotiate with Congress. You know, I'm not going to be able to say, like, President Obama let's do an executive order, OK.... It would be a lot easier, but you just can't do it when you're not supposed to do it.

Stephanopoulos followed up by asking: "But bottom line, do you want taxes on the wealthy to go up or down?"

To which Trump replied: "They will go up a little bit."

Stephanopoulos then said: "But they're going down in your plan."

Trump continued:

No, no, in my plan they're going down, but by the time it's negotiated, they'll go up.

Look, when I'm negotiating with the Democrats, I'm putting in [my] plan. I'm putting in my optimum plan. It's going to be negotiated, George, it's not going to stay there. They're not going to say there's your plan, let's approve it. They're going to say, let's see what we can do.

Now, it will be a negotiation. I will try and keep everything — what I really want is lower [taxes] on business, because business — we're the highest taxed nation in the world. And I want lower [taxes] in the middle class. The middle class in this country is getting decimated.... I will fight like hell for that.

When Stephanopoulos told Trump that under his plan he would, himself, pay less taxes, Trump disputed that assertion and revealed his bargaining strategy:



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But under my plan, it's going to be negotiated. What I'm saying is I will be submitting something like what I did in terms of concept — because it's just a concept, George....

And I'll tell you what the real concept is. Lower taxes for business, lower taxes for the middle class, lower taxes for everybody and then we're going to start negotiating.

So if I want to get lower taxes, which is very important for me, I'm not going to put in high taxes and I'm not even going to put in what I necessarily want. I'm going to put in lower than I want and we're going to negotiate.

Stephanopoulos then asked Trump to get to the bottom line for high income earners, asking: "But in the end, will someone like me or Donald Trump pay more under your tax plan?"

To which, Trump replied:

I have a feeling we may pay some more. But I'll tell you, the middle class is going to pay a lot less. And I wouldn't mind paying more, George. We've got to do something. I mean I wouldn't mind paying more.

But business will pay less. The middle class will pay less. We're going to bring in our money. You know, the corporate inversion ... going on is incredible, with the companies leaving [America]. But we have trillions of dollars outside of the country. We have a 10 percent tax on that money. Right now, they can't bring it back in. And by not bringing it back in, George, that's a disaster.

On NBC's *Meet the Press* program, host Chuck Todd also asked Trump about his tax plan, saying that it "is one where the biggest beneficiaries are the [highest earning] 0.1 percent when it comes to raw dollars that will be saved among taxes."

Todd continued by saying that in an interview earlier this week, Trump seemed to say, "You know what, my tax plan, it's not set in stone. And maybe I'll raise taxes. Maybe I'll actually raise taxes on the rich." The host then asked Trump: "Which is it? Are you willing to raise taxes on [the] 0.1 percent or not?"

In his reply, Trump repeated his position that the final result would be the product of negotiation:

Let me explain how the world works, okay? I think nobody knows more about taxes than I do, and income than I do.... I come up with the biggest tax cut by far of any candidate. Anybody. And I put it in. But that doesn't mean that's what we're going to get. We have to negotiate.

The thing I'm going to do is make sure the middle class gets good tax breaks. Because they have been absolutely shunned. The other thing, I'm going to fight very hard for business. For the wealthy, I think, frankly, it's going to go up. And you know what, it really should go up.

When Todd asked Trump if people shouldn't take him at his word, because, after all, "everything is negotiable," Trump continued:

It's not a word.... It's called life, Chuck. It's not my word, of course. I put in a proposal. You know what they are? They're really proposals. People can say it's a tax plan. It's really a tax proposal. Because after I put it in, and I think you know the Senate and Congress.... They start working with you, and they start fighting. And you know, let's see what happens. But I put in a proposal. Under my proposal, it's the biggest tax cut by far, of any candidate by far. But I'm not under the illusion that that's going to pass. They're going to come to me. They're going to want to raise it for the rich. Frankly, they're going to want to raise it for the rich more than anybody else.

But the middle class has to be protected. The rich are probably going to end up paying more. And



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business might have to pay a little bit more. But we're giving a massive business tax cut.

When Todd asked Trump to explain his apparent contradiction by saying that "Business might pay a little bit more, but we're going to get 'em a massive tax cut," Trump replied:

"I said they might have to pay a little bit more than my proposal, Chuck."

Todd acknowledged that he understood that the increase Trump mentioned was in relation to his proposal rather than current tax rates, and Trump summed up his point by saying: "I'm not talking about more than they're paying now."

Following the weekend programs, Trump also appeared on CNN's *New Day* with Chris Cuomo on Monday. During that interview, Trump repeated that, even after allowing for increase during the negotiating process, tax rates for everyone — including the wealthy — would be lower under his proposed plan than under existing rates.

"Now, if I increase it on the wealthy, they're still going to pay less than they pay now," a report in CNN quoted Trump as saying. "I'm not talking about increasing from this point. I'm talking about increasing from my tax proposal."

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