



BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER

annual report

— 2017



Americans on the Edge

Earlier this spring, the Federal Reserve released a survey that found that 40 percent of American adults believe they would be unable to cover a \$400 emergency expense without relying on a payday lender or selling a possession. Think about that for a minute. If this response is accurate, roughly 100 million Americans are literally living on the fiscal edge—one broken ankle, busted radiator, or lost job away from financial unraveling. While the macro-economy is booming and unemployment is low, real wages have not responded for the working class. In fact, when adjusted for inflation, middle class wages have been essentially stagnant for the last 40 years. At the same time, the cost of tuition and fees at public, four-year universities have more than doubled since 2000. So while many of us are flourishing in the new economy, others are living

with constant economic anxiety and few avenues for mobility. This understandable sense of being left behind is palpable in the frustration that many hold for policymakers, the growing mistrust of anything perceived as elite, and the social and cultural tensions that are flaring in debates over immigration, social welfare, and tax policy.

Over the course of the last year, the Bipartisan Policy Center has initiated a series of connected initiatives designed to enhance economic security and opportunity. We worked with Sens. Manchin, Perdue, Tillis, and Warner to develop a series of specific actions to expand opportunity in Appalachia. To help millions in crisis, BPC is advocating for actionable policy solutions to confront the opioid epidemic and a series of recommendations to reform and strengthen the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. We have also spent time with leaders from the Dakotas, Montana, Nebraska, Wyoming, Iowa, and Minnesota to understand the unique challenges of providing quality health care in the most rural parts of the country. And we initiated a new effort focused on mental and behavioral health which is too often an afterthought in our federal health care debates.

To build new pathways for opportunity, BPC is leading an effort with Rick Santorum and George Miller that has already had a meaningful impact on increasing federal resources for critical early childhood development programs. BPC's Task Force on Main Street Finance is promoting a series of legislative and regulatory proposals to bolster small business. Despite the intense partisan battles since the financial crisis, there is broad-based support for encouraging and enabling banks to provide competitive loans to the small businesses that are the engines of our economy. Zip codes must not be allowed to determine economic opportunity and BPC's Task Force members have traveled around the country to make sure that our focus in D.C. reflects the real pressures being felt by Main Street businesses.

BPC is working with a new task force to address complex questions about the costs and quality of higher education. With student debt topping

\$1.5 trillion, millions of young students are ending their academic careers with debt that outstrips their potential earnings. This untenable situation is delaying family formation and home ownership and greatly burdening the aspirations of a generation of Americans striving to make it in a changing economy. BPC's Higher Education Task Force is developing constructive policies that will increase accountability for higher education institutions while also promoting affordability and improving access for millions of aspiring students.

Finally, we are focused on the broader dynamics that encourage or constrain innovation and program efficacy. In our assessment of over 60 community-based programs, state and local officials have consistently raised concerns about rigid, uncoordinated, and duplicative federal requirements. At the same time, there are numerous examples of local programs that have failed to achieve the desired goals with little insight into what went wrong. BPC believes that one key to enabling innovation with accountability is creating a culture of evidence and knowledge sharing. BPC's Evidence Project is working to make it easier for policymakers to access government data and for researchers to determine what works and why, while ensuring strong privacy protections are in place.

Taken together, BPC's Economic Opportunity Initiative is creating the substantive insights, policy tools, and political coalitions needed to give millions of Americans the opportunity to work hard and get ahead.

Sincerely,

Jason Grumet

President, Bipartisan Policy Center

 @JasonGrumet



Our IMPACTS

I N T H E A R E N A

The Bipartisan Policy Center exists to inform and influence the development of effective and resilient public policy. In addition to BPC reports, forums, workshops, and consensus recommendations, BPC Task Force leaders and expert staff are actively engaged with the policymakers who drive the national agenda. Despite the headwinds of political polarization, BPC's work has had a significant impact on a wide array of legislative and regulatory outcomes.

Improving *Public Policy*

In the 115th Congress, BPC recommendations are reflected in over 40 legislative and regulatory provisions that are improving the health and economic security for millions of Americans and promoting opportunity, innovation, and economic growth including:

Children's Health Insurance Program; Community Health Centers; National Health Service Corps; Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program; NIH funding; accelerating medical innovation; child care on military installations; EITC expansion; chronic health care; access to patient Electronic Health Records and interoperability; retirement security; energy innovation; infrastructure funding; financial regulatory reform; evidence-based policymaking; federal-state coordination; and Congressional oversight and reorganization.



ECONOMY



EDUCATION



ENERGY



EVIDENCE



GOVERNANCE

Expert *Policy Input*

BPC has received more than 150 congressional requests for substantive input and engagement. Key areas of focus include: increasing access and accountability in higher education; increasing participation in retirement savings; infrastructure financing; border security and DACA; fixing the debt limit; rural health care; energy innovation; and climate change.



HEALTH



HOUSING



IMMIGRATION



INFRASTRUCTURE



NATIONAL SECURITY

NEW INITIATIVES

Civility Pledge

In June 2017, the freshman class presidents of the U.S. House of Representatives joined leadership from BPC at the U.S. Capitol and reaffirmed their Commitment to Civility—a pledge to act with respect and civility. The event kicked off a Summer of Civility social media campaign.

Appalachia Initiative

The Appalachia Initiative Task Force gathered leading regional and national experts to explore critical issues in four areas: education and workforce, entrepreneurship and job creation, energy and infrastructure, and rural health. The effort culminated in a September 2017 report charting a bipartisan approach to boost prosperity and economic growth in the region.

Funding Our Future

BPC launched this initiative to strengthen retirement security in America. So far, the campaign has recruited over two dozen partner organizations committed to calling on policymakers to make retirement security a top priority.

Senate Legislative Director Dialogue

This dialogue series brings together Republican and Democratic Legislative Directors to facilitate bipartisan discussion and foster relationships across the aisle. During the 115th Congress, a total of 60 Senate offices have participated.

Strengthening Democracy Initiative

In 2017, SDI convened 130 staff of the House Ways and Means and Senate Finance Committees to promote bipartisan dialogue and policy solutions. In 2018, BPC is bringing together a bipartisan group of Senate health care staff for an “ask the experts” series on key health topics with the potential for cross-party collaboration.

Building Better Relationships

The American Congressional Exchange (ACE) program brought opposing party members of Congress together, outside of D.C., in their home districts.



My extra special heartfelt thanks to the BipartisanPolicyCenter for making this opportunity available to us...to not only get to know one another but to get to know the districts of our fellow Representatives.

— Rep. Jack Bergman (R-MI)



Expanding Our Scope

BPC launched *two* new projects and *four* new task forces:

Projects

- ✓ Early Childhood Education
- ✓ Evidence-Based Policymaking

Task Forces

- ✓ Paid Family Leave
- ✓ Main Street Finance
- ✓ Inspectors General and Congressional Oversight
- ✓ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Bipartisan Dialogue

BPC hosted more than 120 public events with participation by more than 40 members of Congress and five Trump administration officials including: Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson, Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson, U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Kevin McAleenan, and Advisor to the President Ivanka Trump.



BIPARTISANSHIP *at work*

 [ECONOMY]

Accountability in Higher Education

As tuition prices soar, so does the burden of student debt on American students and their families. To help ensure that colleges are doing right by their students, BPC worked closely with two senators' offices—Senators Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH)—to craft “risk-sharing” legislation that strengthens colleges’ accountability over the outcomes of their student borrowers. Under this legislation, higher education institutions would pay fees tied to loan repayment rates among their recent borrowers, funding a “College Opportunity Bonus Program” that would then reward schools based on how many low-income students they enroll and what the loan repayment rates among those low-income borrowers are. This change could give colleges and universities an additional incentive to improve student outcomes, helping to ensure that students make it to graduation equipped with the skills to excel in the workplace and meet their loan obligations.



 [ENERGY]

Fueling Innovation

BPC recognizes the importance of maintaining America’s diverse energy portfolio and has supported the development and deployment of affordable, reliable, and clean energy including advanced nuclear energy, carbon capture and storage, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and more. The American Energy Innovation Council (AEIC) leads a diverse coalition of groups that support robust funding for the Advanced Research Projects Agency–Energy (ARPA-E). AEIC worked with these groups to organize a letter that was signed by more than 96 businesses, universities, and organizations from around the country in support of strong funding for ARPA-E, which saw its funding increase in fiscal year 2018 to its highest level since 2009. Programs such as ARPA-E fund innovative research in every state that can lower energy costs, create jobs, and improve the productivity of American businesses far beyond the energy sector.

Investing in Democracy

The right to vote is an essential part of U.S. democracy, but problems at the polls can lead citizens to mistrust the voting system. Beginning in 2014, BPC partnered with MIT to launch the most ambitious program to study Election Day lines ever conducted in the United States, in order to move the country toward better voting processes. This program has since grown rapidly each election cycle. In 2017, BPC further expanded in Virginia—the only state in the program to hold off-year statewide elections—by doubling the number of counties and cities involved from 16 to 32. Earlier this year, BPC released a final report on how to improve the voter experience, which summarizes key findings from the 2016 study and makes specific recommendations on polling place management. These improvements will strengthen public confidence in our elections and increase voting ease and accessibility for the American people.

A Path to Reform

It's no secret that immigration has been a hotly debated topic, with new headlines popping up in the news virtually every day. In partnership with the National Association of Counties and the National Conference of State Legislatures, BPC hosted several roundtables with elected and appointed state and local officials from around the United States to hear how immigration and immigration policy plays out on the ground across the country. The insights from these conversations have enhanced our ability to drive a constructive dialogue with policymakers on these challenging issues.



Legislating Better Care

Earlier this year, BPC put together “A Policy Roadmap for Individuals with Complex Care Needs” by talking to policymakers, patient advocates, providers, and other experts around the country. Lawmakers included a number of these recommendations in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, including CHRONIC Care provisions that focus on person- and family-centered coordinated care, support for caregivers, and better private and public financing strategies for delivering long-term services and supports. Sixty percent of adults in this country have at least one chronic condition; 40 percent have two or more. These provisions will now ensure that those living with chronic conditions have new options for better care under Medicare.



 [EARLY CHILDHOOD]

A Healthy Start

In early 2017, BPC launched the Early Childhood Initiative. Motivated by shared concerns about the challenges facing families and children, former Sen. Rick Santorum of Pennsylvania and former Rep. George Miller of California came together to co-chair the initiative. Their first report, *A Bipartisan Case for Early Childhood Development*, includes recommendations to better support families, make child care affordable, prioritize early care workforce quality, and address the impact of opioid and substance use disorders on young children and families. Miller and Santorum continue to champion and highlight their recommendations, which set the stage for several key legislative wins in 2018, including expansion of the federal child tax credit; reauthorization of the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program; and a historic increase in funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant. The Early Childhood Initiative is continuing to expand so that all children can have a strong foundation that will allow them to grow, learn, and succeed.

Americans overwhelmingly support the idea of paid family leave, but Congress has yet to turn that growing consensus into actionable, bipartisan policy. BPC's new Task Force on Paid Family Leave seeks to take that next step.

 [NATIONAL SECURITY]

Ready to Serve and Support

BPC's Task Force on Defense Personnel's report, *Building a F.A.S.T. Force: A Flexible Personnel System for a Modern Military*, recommended several key provisions that were secured in this year's National Defense Authorization Act. These provisions will increase U.S. service member satisfaction; improve quality of life for military spouses and families; and ultimately, advance military readiness.

Home Rules

The United States has a severe shortage of safe and affordable homes. About half of the 44 million renter households in the United States spend more than 30 percent of their income on rent, a burden that forces low-income families to make difficult choices between paying for rent and other necessities like utilities, food, and medicine. BPC has consistently highlighted the need for an expanded Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) as a critical tool for growing the supply of affordable homes. Because housing is a key driver of health, expanding LIHTC is also a laudable public health policy aim—a key focus of BPC’s 2017 report, *Building the Case: Low-Income Housing Tax Credits and Health*. While additional resources are needed given the severity of the affordable housing crisis, the omnibus spending agreement for fiscal year 2018 increased support for LIHTC by 12.5 percent over the next four years—its first increase in over a decade.



The Wellness Promise

More than two-thirds of Americans today are overweight or have obesity, resulting in \$210 billion spent annually on obesity-related health care. BPC launched the My Healthy Weight pledge in late 2017, which calls on private insurers, state Medicaid agencies, and major self-insured employers to reimburse counseling services for obesity prevention and treatment in both the clinical and community settings. As of mid-2018, five private insurers, four state Medicaid agencies, and two major employers—collectively covering more than 10.5 million lives—have signed the My Healthy Weight pledge.





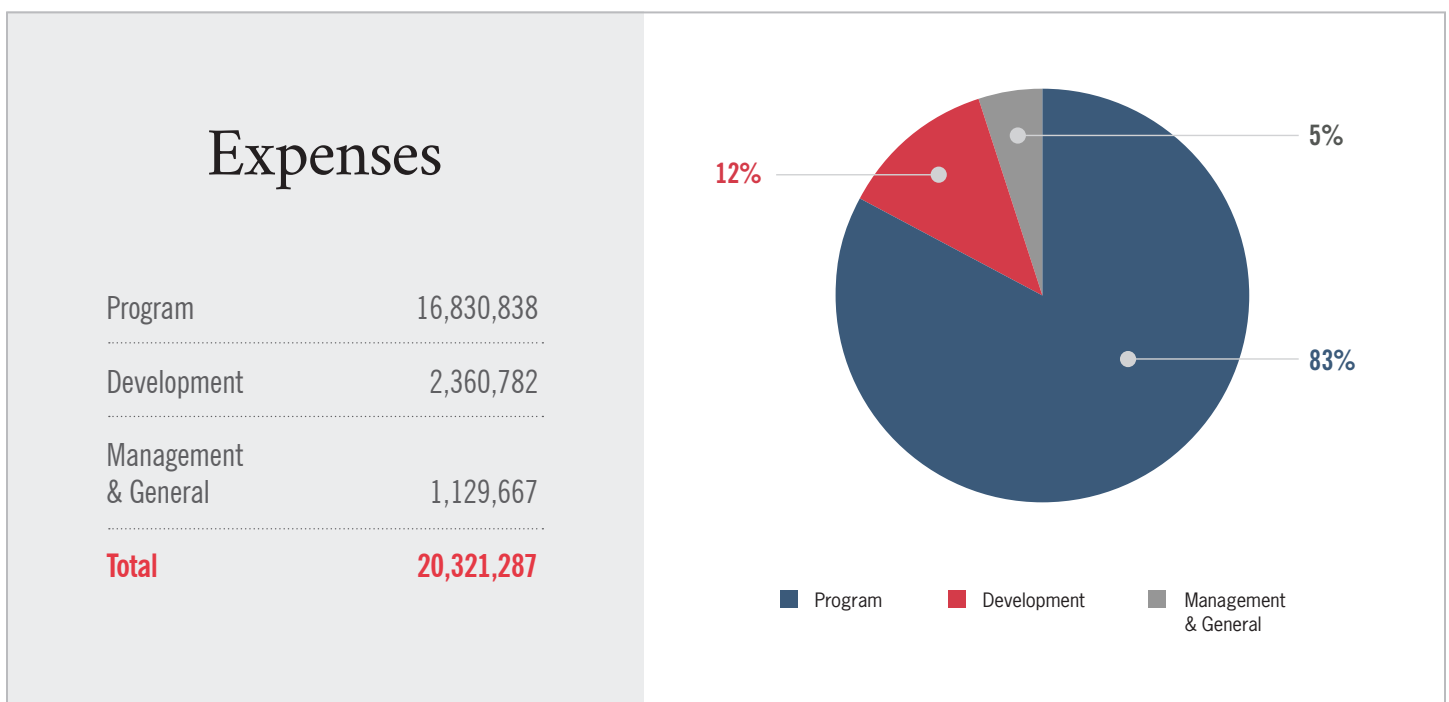
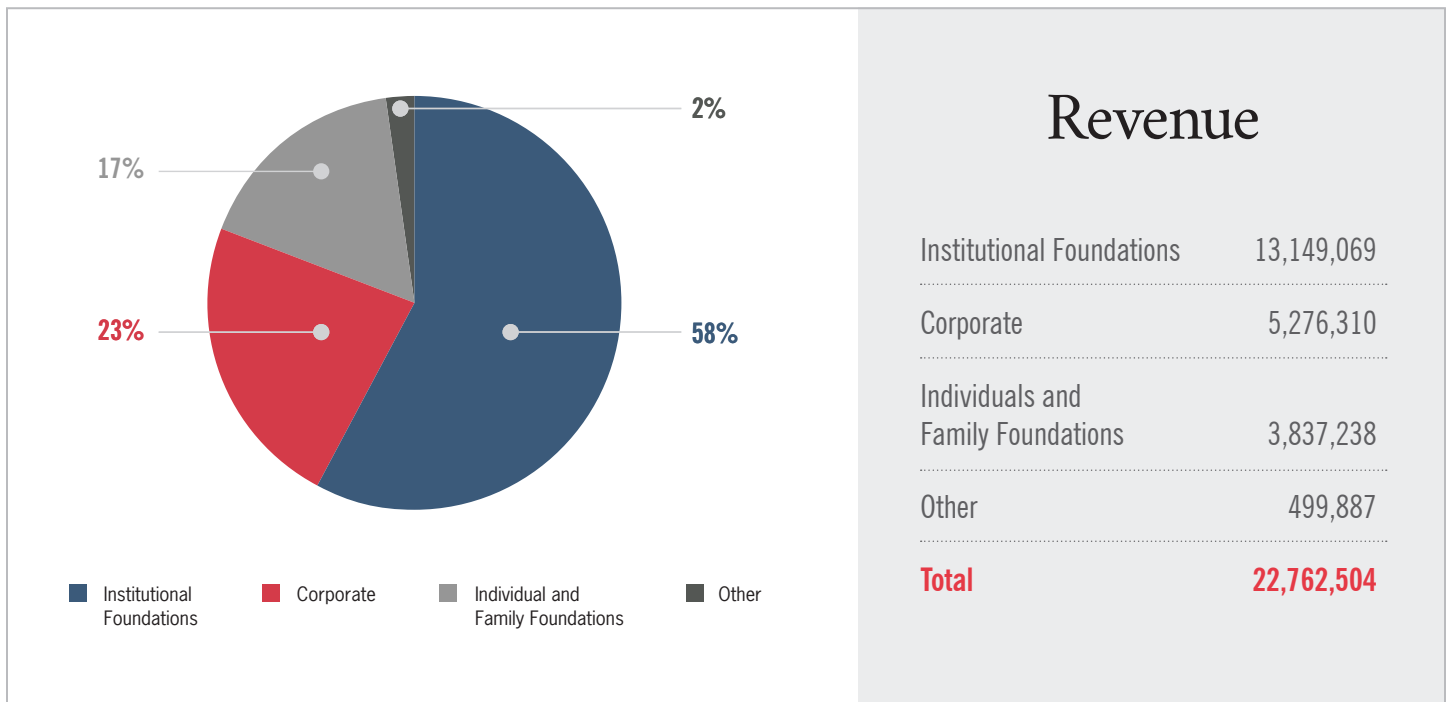
A Battle for Lives

The opioid epidemic is one of the most significant public health challenges of the day. In alignment with BPC's Governors' Council recommendations to President Trump's Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis, Congress passed the bipartisan INTERDICT Act to better detect fentanyl and synthetic opioids and to curb their flow into the country. BPC testified before Congress on revitalizing the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy to ensure a coordinated federal response to the opioid crisis, and worked with Congress on ideas to reduce the overprescribing of opioids and to expand treatment for opioid use disorder. These efforts matter given that in 2016 alone, 2.1 million Americans had an opioid use disorder and 42,249 Americans died from overdosing on opioids—116 every day.

Building America

The United States has trillions of dollars in backlogged infrastructure needs across the country and billions of dollars of private capital on the sidelines. BPC's Executive Council on Infrastructure is working to attract private capital into partnerships with the public sector in order to deliver high-quality, modern infrastructure that will serve the nation for generations to come. The council educated stakeholders and congressional staff about the complexity of public-private partnerships (P3s) and the role they can play in addressing infrastructure funding needs. In addition, the council acted quickly to address concerns and questions raised on Capitol Hill. For example, in response to questions from elected officials, the council developed a paper explaining how P3s can work in rural areas and across the spectrum of infrastructure. Notably, there are irrigation projects (Arkansas), broadband systems (Kentucky), and wastewater treatment plants (Massachusetts) being built in rural areas using private funding. Based on the council's work, Congress asked BPC for assistance in drafting rural infrastructure proposals, and BPC briefed numerous congressional caucuses. Importantly, a bipartisan group of House members included several of BPC's proposals in legislation they introduced and offered those proposals as amendments to the Senate version of the Farm Bill.

2017 *financials*



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