

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Monday July 30, 2012

Manchin's tax vote was the correct one

I strongly applaud Sen. Joe Manchin for standing up this week for working families in West Virginia by voting to continue tax cuts for the middle class, end those that benefit only the richest 2 percent of taxpayers, and protect critical tax relief for thousands of West Virginia's low-income working families.

He also took a critical step toward putting the nation on a responsible fiscal path.

I agree with Manchin that it would be better to address the expiration of the Bush-era tax cuts as part of a larger deficit reduction plan.

But he is right that we should protect working people and end tax breaks that help only the wealthy few.

By rejecting a proposal by Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, that would have continued substantial tax breaks for those with incomes over \$250,000 while failing to extend critical tax breaks for working families including the Earned Income Tax Credit, the refundable Child Tax Credit and the American Opportunity Tax Credit (for college expenses), Manchin voted for a fairer tax code.

Under Hatch's legislation, more than 77,000 West Virginia families with nearly 129,000 children would lose more than \$55 million in income.

Let's be clear: The rich would get a tax cut under the proposal Manchin supports. They just wouldn't get additional cuts that no one else receives - costing tens of billions of dollars more for just a one-year extension.

With the Bush-era tax cuts expiring at the end of this year, we urge all of West Virginia's lawmakers to stand up for working families. We simply cannot afford to give big tax breaks to those who need them the least while leaving working families behind.

Ted Boettner**Charleston**

Boettner is executive director for the West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy.

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