

Lisa Leaverton  
Orland  
LD 1047

Greetings, Senator Grohoski and Representative Cloutier and Committee members:

I am writing in support of LD 1047 which would add an “Unearned Income Surcharge”, thereby making the tax system less regressive, specifically through the additional tax of 4% on capital gains, depending on filing status. I am also writing in support of LD 1089, which adds a surcharge on incomes above 1,000,000 to fund a portion of our state’s education.

We need the wealthy and corporations to invest in the place where they live and the country they rely upon, and this begins by paying their fair share of taxes, just like the rest of us. The wealthy have long been treated to unfair advantages, capital gains tax being one of these.

The richest corporations and individuals have an obligation to pay their fair share for the public resources and services provided by the American people, from which they have gained an outsized share of the benefit. If you work for a living, you pay your fair share in taxes — the time is overdue for the wealthiest to do the same. The small surcharge proposed on capital gains would be one step closer toward an economy that works for everyone, not just the rich.

We know from experience that tax cuts for the rich destabilizes the economy, despite claims to the contrary. We’ve seen how unfair tax advantages for the already rich and corporations don’t pay off. We know the drill. The cost of regressive policy favoring the wealthy and corporations over many years burdens our state, and ultimately we subsidize the wealthy and corporations. This is especially vexing to me, as a taxpayer. See some stats below. I hope to see Maine take this step toward tax fairness by passing LD 1047. I and LD 1089. Let’s balance our tax code.

Thank you,

Lisa Leaverton,  
Orland, Maine

Stats: Unfair taxation has destabilized our economy. Although the "average" income in the US, sounds decent- in 2024 this falls between \$62,027 and \$63,795, consider the distribution. 84 percent of families in the US have wealth below the mean. Very few people actually are making a living wage. According to the Federal Reserve, in the first quarter of 2024, the top 1% of earners in the United States held 30.4% of the country's wealth. This changed from 20% to 30.4% since Reagan. According to Statista: "In the first quarter of 2024, almost two-thirds percent of the total wealth in the United States was owned by the top 10 percent of earners. In comparison, the lowest 50 percent of earners only owned 2.5 percent of the total wealth." It is important to keep in mind that some wealth especially for the middle class is completely tied to home equity (if you are that lucky) with no liquidity. Consider that these average incomes also include pricey health care subsidies. That isn’t much at all. And on the other hand, a lot of wealth is just invisible and not taxed (capital gains).