

EPI's accomplishments in 2017

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EPI's truth-telling apparatus kicked into high gear after the 2016 presidential election, with research and outreach to counter efforts to undermine workers' wages, rights, and working conditions and present policies to boost the economic security of working families. Below are some of the ways EPI made sure the well-being of working people was front and center in policy debates, news coverage, and social media in the last months of 2016 and throughout 2017.

We held the Trump administration and Congress accountable for their policies toward working people.

In January 2017 EPI launched the **Perkins Project on Worker Rights and Wages** to track actions by the Trump administration, Congress, and the courts that affect working people and the economy. This watchdog unit of economists and lawyers, led by former Obama Department of Labor Chief Economist Heidi Shierholz, keeps an especially close eye on the federal agencies that establish and defend workers' rights, wages, and working conditions, including the Department of Labor, the National Labor Relations Board, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The interactive **Policy Watch** tracker provides regular updates on the latest actions and explains how the actions affect workers. In February, Dana Milbank of the *Washington Post* listed EPI as one of the intellectual organizations that has "**the brainpower to counter Trump.**"

EPI's Perkins experts call attention to the most egregious attacks on the working conditions and living standards of ordinary Americans, with regular reports, statements, and blog posts. As one of its earliest actions in 2017, the Perkins team joined a coalition working to oppose the confirmation of Andrew Puzder as labor secretary. EPI statements, reports, and letters to congressional leaders stressed the folly of giving the nation's top labor job to a CEO with a record of **violating labor laws, opposing worker protections, and allowing rampant sexual harassment** in the workplace. The EPI Policy Center secured 38,000 of the 317,000 signatures on a coalition petition urging senators to oppose Puzder's nomination. Puzder withdrew his nomination as senators' support waned. The Perkins team was also an early and consistent critic of the Trump administration's anti-regulatory agenda, using **reports, fact sheets, and blog posts** to name the true corporate beneficiaries of that agenda along with its true victims—working people. EPI's work has informed exposés of Trump's anti-worker deregulation agenda in *The New York Times*, the *Harvard Journal of Legislation*, *Newsweek*, and *Salon*.

Perkins experts actively defend regulations under threat. For example, Shierholz has in reports and statements repeatedly called out the Trump administration for actively working to weaken or rescind the “fiduciary” rule, an Obama-era regulation that protects Americans’ hard-earned retirement savings by requiring financial professionals offering retirement investment advice to put their clients’ interests first. On November 29, 2017, the administration announced an 18-month delay of key provisions of the rule, on top of delays put in place earlier in 2017. EPI estimates that retirement savers who get or have gotten bad advice during these delays will lose a total of **\$18.5 billion over the next 30 years**. Further, the rule is being delayed with the clear intention of never fully implementing it. Instead, the Trump administration is buying time until it can permanently dismantle key elements of the rule. In addition to being covered in policy-oriented publications such as *Bloomberg BNA*, *Politico Pro*, and *Inside Sources*, Shierholz’s warnings about the fiduciary rule were covered by national media such as *Money* and regional media such as the *St. Louis-Post Dispatch*. Perkins work on the fiduciary rule delay and other worker betrayals was featured in a report by Senator **Elizabeth Warren** (D-Mass.).

EPI released a Real Agenda for Working People at the end of 2016 that lays out what Trump would do if he were serious about creating jobs, raising wages, and fixing our rigged economy. The agenda includes about two dozen specific steps policymakers could take to return prosperity to working-class Americans. EPI has backed up this agenda with reports making the case for the planks in the agenda. Examples include a report calling for President Trump to retain Janet Yellen as Federal Reserve Board chair and nominate Board governors who will pursue full employment and wage growth, and **a series of reports and blog posts** blasting Republican tax “reform” plans that would benefit corporations and the wealthiest Americans while failing to raise wages for anyone else. EPI’s policy and research teams have also consistently promoted planks of this agenda to federal policymakers and made the case for a worker-centered economic policy vision. The “Better Deal” economic agenda released by congressional Democrats in November included many of the specific policy actions EPI and the EPI Policy Center call for, including strengthening collective bargaining rights.

We warned that dismantling key regulations would take billions out of workers’ pockets.

In 2017 the Trump administration hurt workers’ pay in many ways, including acts to dismantle two key regulations that protect the pay of low- to middle-income workers. The administration first failed to defend a 2016 rule strengthening overtime protections for these workers, and then it took steps to gut regulations that protect restaurant servers and other “tipped workers” from having their tips taken by their employers.

The 2016 overtime pay rule **restored lost overtime pay** to America’s workers by raising the salary threshold below which workers are automatically eligible for overtime pay—from \$23,660 to \$47,476. Prior to the 2016 rule, the threshold had not been adequately raised in more than 40 years. In a series of blog posts, statements, and reports throughout 2017, EPI explained that effectively **abandoning the new overtime threshold** deprived **12.5**

million workers of automatic overtime protection and will cost workers an estimated \$1.2 billion a year.

In December 2017, EPI warned that the Trump administration planned to allow restaurant owners and managers at other establishments employing tipped workers to pocket workers' tips by rescinding portions of current tip regulations. The current regulations allow employers to pool the tips servers receive but prohibit employers from retaining any of the pooled tips themselves (i.e., the pooled tips must be redistributed among workers). The proposed rule puts no restrictions on what employers can do with pooled tips, as long as workers are paid the minimum wage. An EPI report released in mid-December showed that employers would pocket an estimated \$5.8 billion of workers' tips under the Trump administration's proposed "tip stealing" rule. The theft of wages from tipped workers raised outrage nationwide, with the *Los Angeles Times*, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, and many other media outlets publishing editorials and articles citing EPI's research on the potential losses to tipped workers.

We documented the threat to workers' rights posed by the growing use of forced arbitration.

The national conversation about forced arbitration got a much-needed jolt of urgency with *The Growing Use of Mandatory Arbitration*, a September 2017 EPI report showing that a stunning 56 percent of private-sector nonunion workers—more than 60 million people—are subject to mandatory arbitration agreements. This means that if their employment rights are violated, they cannot bring their claims before a court of law but must instead go through an arbitration process that overwhelmingly favors employers. So, when a worker is fired for being pregnant, or is underpaid because of her race, or is sexually harassed, she is locked into a process that puts her at a disadvantage. Mandatory arbitration agreements are typically signed by employees as a condition of employment. The report was shared widely via social media including in a tweet by Ralph Nader. *The Washington Post* cited EPI's report in an article about the tools used to silence workers facing workplace harassment, and NPR cited the report in a story about *Murphy Oil*, a Supreme Court case on the use of mandatory arbitration agreements in the workplace. The plaintiff in the *Murphy Oil* case has quoted the findings from EPI's report in oral arguments before the Supreme Court.

EPI's research on the relationship between arbitration and workplace abuse helped shape the national conversation surrounding the wave of public allegations of sexual abuse by powerful men in politics, business, and the media. In news coverage, forced arbitration was cited as a barrier for women seeking justice against their abusers—under arbitration, accusations are kept confidential and companies can decide who adjudicates the case. In November, U.S. Rep. Cheri Bustos (D-Ill.) and Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.) held a press conference announcing legislation that would ban use of mandatory arbitration for sexual harassment disputes, citing EPI's research. *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, and the South Carolina *Post and Courier* were among the media outlets using EPI research to explain how arbitration clauses feed a culture of unrestrained sexual harassment.

We busted myths about gender and racial pay gaps that block progress toward a more just economy.

EPI explained how many forms of discrimination throughout women's lives contribute to the gender wage gap with the October 2016 release of *What Is the Gender Pay Gap and Is It Real?* The report counters the false argument that women make less because they choose low-paying jobs or take time off from their careers to raise children. It shows that even when adjustments are made for factors like education, experience, and race, women are paid less than men. The report has garnered a wide range of media coverage since its release, including stories in *CBS Moneywatch*, *Rewire*, VICE's *Broadly*, *New York Magazine*, and *The American Prospect*. EPI also launched the [gender pay gap calculator](#) and released an updated [women's economic agenda](#) at an [event](#) featuring prominent journalists, government leaders, and worker advocates.

On April 4, 2017, **Equal Pay Day**, EPI released an [Economic Snapshot](#) that shows that the average woman in 2016 was paid 22 percent less than the average man, even after controlling for race and ethnicity, education, experience, and location.

EPI research exposed the myths used to minimize the role of racial discrimination in racial wage gaps. In the fall of 2016 EPI released *Black-White Wage Gaps Expand with Rising Wage Inequality*. The report, by Valerie Wilson of EPI's Program on Race, Ethnicity, and the Economy (PREE) and Rutgers University professor William M. Rodgers III, raised the alarm over growing racial wage gaps, which were larger in 2015 than in 1979. The report finds that racial wage gaps are growing primarily due to discrimination, along with rising inequality in general. The report received top-tier media coverage including from the editorial board of *The New York Times*, NPR, *Marketplace*, *The Associated Press*, Reuters, *The Guardian*, *CNN Money*, *The Root*, *New York Magazine*, *Money*, *Ebony*, *Glamour*, and many more.

A [blog post](#) by Wilson and EPI's Janelle Jones in the spring of 2017 rebutted claims that black workers make less than white workers because they don't work as hard. From 1979 to 2015, the bottom fifth of black workers increased their annual hours worked by 21.9 percent. During that same period, the bottom fifth of whites increased their hours worked by 17.0 percent.

EPI researchers came to the defense of black women, who face a gender and racial pay penalty but are often blamed for their poor wages. On July 31, 2017, Black Women's Equal Pay Day, EPI published a [blog post](#) and an [infographic](#) challenging mythmakers who blame black women's choices for the fact that they make 33 percent less than white men. These materials explain in an accessible way that black women make less despite the fact that they have increased their work hours, and despite the fact that the widening wage gap appears between black women and white men in the *same* occupations and at the *same* education levels. *HuffPost*, *ThinkProgress*, *Quartz*, *MarketWatch*, *The Root*, *Mic*, and *Glamour* reported EPI's research. EPI researchers also contributed to a Congressional Black Caucus [legislative conference](#) session highlighting the unique role and current

situation of black women in the economy.

EPI's Program on Race, Ethnicity, and the Economy (PREE) is a key source for ongoing research and analysis on the ways in which economic disparities continue to plague communities of color. A full list of publications by PREE can be found on the [EPI website](#).

We provided an in-depth view of ‘The State of Working America.’

EPI launched its [State of Working America Data Library](#) in September 2016 and significantly expanded the data library in 2017. The library is an online, easily accessible clearinghouse of EPI's unique analyses of government data on employment, wages, wage gaps, and benefits, with breakdowns by gender, race and ethnicity, and education. New in 2017 are annual data on wages and work hours, poverty-level wages, union coverage, wage gaps between high- and low-wage workers, wage gaps between CEOs and workers, health insurance and pension coverage, and productivity and hourly compensation. Researchers, the media, and the public use the data to explore and explain trends affecting the well-being of America's workers.

In 2017 EPI also created the [Autopilot Economy Tracker](#), a set of real-time benchmarks to help Americans gauge how well the public officials elected to serve them are performing as stewards of the U.S. economy. By comparing how key indicators such as the unemployment rate changed with how they would have changed absent government intervention, the tracker shows whether policymakers can claim credit or blame for economic trends.

We highlighted the critical role of unions in improving wages and working conditions for all workers.

In August 2017 EPI published [How Today's Unions Help Working People](#), detailing how collective bargaining plays an essential role in today's labor market by raising working people's wages and supporting a fair and prosperous economy. By providing updated statistics on who today's unions represent and where they are strongest, the report shows the diversity of today's labor unions, not only by race and gender, but also by occupation (union members include dental hygienists, graduate students, and digital journalists, as well as manufacturing workers and public-sector employees). The report warns that workers' freedom to join together and bargain with their employer is under attack by state "right-to-work" laws and other corporate opposition, which threatens both middle-class wage growth and the health of the democracy. The report and accompanying share graphics garnered significant media coverage in national press ([The Washington Post](#), [MarketWatch](#), [New Republic](#), [Fortune](#)) and regional outlets ([Wisconsin Public Radio](#), [The Sacramento Bee](#)). The report was widely shared on Facebook and Twitter, including notable tweets by [Rep. Keith Ellison](#), [NYT's Steve Greenhouse](#), [AFT's Randi Weingarten](#),

Bill Press, AFL-CIO, AFSCME, CWA, United Steelworkers, UFCW, Fight for \$15, UNITE HERE, and Education Votes (part of NEA). Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) echoed EPI's message in calls to rebuild the American labor movement. The Massachusetts Nurses Association reprinted the report for its annual convention.

We exposed how government-sponsored residential segregation helped create the tinderbox that was Ferguson, Baltimore, and other communities.

EPI Research Associate Richard Rothstein discussed his explosive new book, *The Color of Law*, at an EPI event in June 2017. The book is a detailed take-down of the myth of “de facto” segregation—the idea that U.S. neighborhoods remain segregated primarily because of income differences, private prejudices, or the desires of blacks and whites to live with same-race neighbors. Rothstein resurrects the forgotten history of how federal, state, and local governments—with racially explicit intent—segregated American cities from San Francisco to Boston. He demonstrates that the government’s purposeful creation of American ghettos created the context for conflicts in places like Ferguson, Baltimore, Milwaukee, and Charlotte. This unconstitutional state sponsorship of residential segregation calls for remedial policies to integrate metropolitan areas nationwide, he writes.

Rothstein briefed members of Congress on his findings and implications for federal housing policy. And he was featured in PBS’s *Frontline* report on the affordable housing crisis in the United States and interviewed for NPR’s *Fresh Air* and *1A*. The Brooklyn Public Library awarded *The Color of Law* its Literary Prize for Nonfiction, *Publishers Weekly* named the book among its **Top Ten Best Books of 2017**, and *The New York Times* listed it as one of its **Notable Books of 2017**. It also appeared on the longlist for the **National Book Award** in nonfiction and has been reviewed in many media outlets including *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. Ta-Nehisi Coates, who praised Rothstein and his research in *The Atlantic*, joined Rothstein for a **discussion of the book** at an event in Washington, D.C.

We exposed the undeniable link between economic and educational inequalities that betray the ideal of the ‘American Dream.’

EPI reports on achievement gaps based on social-class and race/ethnicity-based achievement gaps showed how education outcomes mimic, and suffer from, other societal and economic inequalities. *Five Key Trends in U.S. Student Performance* documents how racial and economic segregation undermine educational progress for our children. *Education Inequalities at the School Starting Gate* reveals that early gaps in skills (mathematics, reading, self-control, and approaches to learning) between affluent and

poor children are very large and have remained practically unchanged over the last two decades. Both reports warn that education inequalities not only threaten children's development during their school years but shortchange them by lowering their economic prospects later in life, perpetuating a lack of social mobility across generations. These reports provide a critical perspective for education policy debates: by focusing on the poverty and social inequalities that are the real drivers of low performance, EPI's research argues for comprehensive educational supports to bridge these gaps and public policies that foster such supports. Other EPI publications show that the [assumption that school vouchers improve student achievement is unproven](#), argue that replacing teacher pensions with 401(k)-style plans would [increase retirement insecurity](#) and teacher turnover, [confront the myth that public school teachers are overpaid](#), address the [ongoing ill effects](#) that result from de facto [segregation in schools](#), and [call for quality preschool for all children](#). Altogether, EPI's education researchers have continued to document how early childhood education, the strengthening of our public education system, improved teacher pre-service training, and investments in after-school, summer enrichment, and health and nutrition programs are essential elements of an effective education policy agenda.

We refuted the 'job-killing robot' myth that lets policymakers off the hook for real ills done to workers.

EPI has long called foul on reports that robots will take all our jobs, and we renewed our attacks on the myth again in 2017. The notion that automation and technology will eliminate jobs for a vast swath of the workforce is not only false, it is harmful, EPI's Larry Mishel and Josh Bivens caution in [The Zombie Robot Argument Lurches On](#). The robot myth creates a bogeyman (the robots) that distracts from the real and immediate and problems threatening workers. American wages and benefits have stagnated in part because declining unionization, increasing use of contingent workers, expanding use of binding arbitration agreements in employment contracts, and other trends that are shifting power from workers to employers. The report and a [related snapshot](#) garnered significant media coverage, including by [The Atlantic](#), [Politico](#), and [Marketplace](#). Mishel and EPI's Heidi Shierholz have given numerous talks on the issue in the last year, including at [Rice University](#) and before the [Council on Foreign Relations](#) and the House Committee on Education and the Workforce. Shierholz dismisses fears of technological advances leading to mass unemployment in a [Vox video](#) on the future of work.

We helped shape the federal legislative response to key challenges confronting working families.

The Economic Policy Institute Policy Center (EPIPC) conducted briefings for congressional policymakers on every area of our research, including wages and inequality, labor law and the state of collective bargaining, trade and globalization, race and the economy,

immigration, and taxes. Through these briefings, we sustain the connection between EPI research and recommendations and both the needs of working people and the realities of the legislative landscape.

EPI's Josh Bivens spoke at a briefing hosted by the Full Employment Caucus about the Federal Reserve and the impact of monetary policy on jobs and communities of color. Bivens and Rob Scott briefed congressional staff on issues related to trade policy, currency, and the importance of putting workers at the center of any trade deals and negotiations. Josh Bivens and Robert Scott are two EPI experts who frequently **testify** before congressional committees and federal agencies and submit statements and letters to the record for hearings as part of educational efforts. For example, Scott **testified** before a House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on "**China's Technological Rise: Challenges to U.S. Innovation and Security.**"

EPI Policy Center research and policy team members, predominantly our Perkins team of labor policy experts, worked with congressional legislators and staff to formulate legislative and public education responses to actions by the 115th Congress and the Department of Labor that threatened collective bargaining rights, the right to overtime pay, the joint employer standard, worker protections, workplace fairness, retirement security, and more. EPI produced analysis spotlighting the stakes involved in these debates—from **how consumers stand to lose to financial interests in arbitration** to the impact of **proposed cuts to the federal budget on different communities.**

The EPI Policy Center also provided analysis or recommendations on proactive, progressive legislative proposals to expand overtime pay, strengthen collective bargaining, expand retirement security, combat wage theft, boost youth employment, and more.

For example, EPI continues to build consensus for a living wage at the federal level. *Raising the Minimum Wage to \$15 by 2024 Would Give 41 Million Working People a Raise*, an EPI report published in April 2017, analyzed how **the Raise the Wage Act of 2017** would help workers. The report made the economic case for raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 by 2024 and helped generate support for this federal bill, which was proposed, introduced, supported, and championed by Democratic leaders, 30 senators, and 166 representatives. The report also brought media attention to the issue, generating coverage by *The Washington Post* and other publications.

For seventh year in a row, EPIPC worked closely with the Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC) to develop and score the policy proposals in CPC's alternative budget proposal, providing **solid economic support** for a progressive vision and framework.

We helped raise wages and living standards by supporting minimum wage increases, fair scheduling, and overtime protections across the states.

EPI continues to support state and local minimum wage increases by providing data on the effects of national, state, and local minimum wage laws on working families. EPI research played a role in each of the four successful state ballot campaigns to increase the minimum wage in November 2016, increasing to more than two dozen the number of successful state and local minimum wage campaigns that have relied in part on EPI data. City governments that have used EPI data to enact minimum wage increases in 2017 include Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Montgomery County, Maryland. EPI's [Minimum Wage Tracker](#) map provides updated information on states and localities that have raised their minimum wages.

A key focus of EPI's minimum wage research in 2017 involved countering a study that used flawed analysis to claim that Seattle's \$15 minimum wage is killing jobs. EPI's June 2017 report on this, [The "High Road" Seattle Labor Market and the Effects of the Minimum Wage Increase](#), was cited in nearly every media story covering the flawed study, including in [Politico](#), [Slate](#), and [The New York Times](#).

EPI is in the vanguard of the Fair Scheduling movement. EPI provides vital data and technical assistance to advocates fighting for predictable schedules for the millions of [low-wage and/or hourly workers](#)—nearly half of these workers—who have no input into their work hours. Nine out of ten workers in retail and fast-food service jobs report variable hours, and part-time workers are even more likely to have variable and unpredictable schedules, according to EPI's December 2016 report [Still Falling Short on Hours and Pay](#). The unpredictability of income makes it hard for families to make ends meet, and the unpredictability of schedules makes it hard to plan basic tasks such as doctor visits or school meetings. In 2017, EPI weighed in on this issue through blog posts and reports and through testimony in Montgomery County, Maryland, and New York City. EPI provided data for successful campaigns to establish fair workweek ordinances in Seattle and San Jose in 2016, and in [New York City](#) in 2017.

EPI is sustaining the fight for overtime protection. In 2016, President Obama and the Department of Labor [issued a rule raising the overtime salary threshold from \\$23,660 to \\$47,476](#), strengthening the rights of 12.5 million workers to receive overtime pay and earn a fair and decent living. Under the rule, workers who fall below the threshold don't have to prove that they are not "executive, administrative, or professional" employees to secure overtime pay for hours they work beyond 40 per week. EPI's experts were instrumental in getting the new rule issued and continued to provide intellectual, legal, and economics backbone to defend it throughout 2017. The DOL's overdue attempt to restore lost pay to America's workers was blocked in the courts by business interests, and on October 31, 2017, the Trump administration made clear in legal proceedings that it would not defend the rule. Setting the salary threshold below the 2016 level would roll back a long overdue

wage increase for American workers. EPI continues to engage heavily in this fight, with EPI Policy Director Heidi Shierholz and EPI Labor Counsel Celine McNicholas providing [public comments](#), [statements](#), and [blog posts](#) explaining how an overtime threshold lower than \$47,476 would hurt low- and middle-wage workers.

EPI is bringing the campaign for overtime protection to the states. In November 2017, EPI and the Economic Analysis and Research Network (EARN) published *What's at Stake in the States if the 2016 Federal Raise to the Overtime Pay Threshold Is Not Preserved—and What States Can Do about It*. The report quantifies how many workers in each state lost guaranteed overtime protection with the court order to block the overtime rule. It calls for states to enact legislation or make rule changes that restore overtime protections to workers. An accompanying packet of materials provides [guidance](#) on potential state laws and rules and answers questions for state media outlets and advocates.

We confronted the campaign to suppress workers' rights in the states.

An August 2017 report by EPI Associate Labor Counsel Marni von Wilpert raised awareness of the recent wave of preemption laws that have swept across the country in the last decade. The report, *City Governments Are Raising Standards for Working People—and State Legislators Are Lowering Them Back Down*, documents how conservative state legislatures are passing laws designed to void city or county laws that help working people. The report focuses on laws in 26 states that nullify local efforts in five areas: raising the minimum wage, guaranteeing paid leave, providing fair work-scheduling protections, ensuring that government projects pay prevailing wages, and mandating project labor agreements for government contracts.

In November, EPI went live with its online interactive map, “[Worker Rights Preemption in the US](#).” Visitors can click on the map to see the laws in each state and get a quick tutorial on how these laws hurt working people.

We highlighted the job losses of proposed health care repeal.

In January 2017, EPI released *Repealing the Affordable Care Act Would Cost Jobs in Every State*, by Research Director Josh Bivens. The report shows that repealing the Affordable Care Act (ACA) would cost the economy 1.2 million jobs in 2019, with jobs lost in every state. The report looks at the effects of cuts to both spending and taxes under a full repeal and finds that the \$109 billion in spending cuts would have a disproportionately negative effect on those states with the highest share of low- and middle-income families and on those states that took up the ACA Medicaid expansion; the \$70 billion in tax cuts, on the other hand, would disproportionately benefit those states with the largest share of households in the top 1 percent. The report was covered by *The New York Times* and *The*

Atlantic, among others. EPI's popular accompanying [infographic](#) (87,000 page views) features two interactive maps showing how ACA repeal would affect both health care and jobs in every state. The [interactive map](#) went viral on [Facebook](#), drawing 49,543 views just from Facebook referrals in the first few days of release. Bivens' analysis of the premium and copay hikes that would result from an ACA repeal exposed a central lie at the core of arguments for repeal: that it would reduce high out-of-pocket costs that are an excessive burden on patients. As his report showed, the replacement plan that Republican leaders were pushing would *not* decrease out-of-pocket costs but would instead increase them by roughly \$33 billion a year.

We drew attention to the need for child care reform.

Over the last two years, EPI has ramped up its work on child care, drawing much-needed attention to the too-low [pay for child care workers](#), calling for [bold national investments in child care](#), and outlining the extraordinary cost of child care compared with other basic family expenses. Early in 2017, EPI released a joint paper with the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment (CSCCE) at UC Berkeley titled, *What Does Good Child Care Reform Look Like?* The papers' authors examine the barriers to affordable high-quality early child care and education and provide a framework with which to assess proposed child care policy solutions. EPI's child care research garnered attention from national, local, and online media outlets, including *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *New York Magazine*, *Boston Magazine*, *Business Insider*, and *TIME's Money*.

We warned that Trump's proposed immigration policies will hurt American workers' wages.

EPI's Daniel Costa injected a much-needed perspective into coverage of the Trump administration's decision to end Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). His September 2017 [blog post](#) explained that ending the program will hurt not only the 800,000 young immigrants targeted but also the U.S. workers toiling beside them. Once DACA recipients lose their work authorization, the threat of deportation will render them "effectively . . . unable to complain when they are paid below the minimum wage, aren't paid for overtime hours, or when their employer subjects them to unsafe conditions at the workplace," Costa notes. This *reduces the bargaining power of Americans who work alongside unauthorized workers.*

Costa has spent the last year stressing the need for immigrants to have equal rights, and the connection between failing to protect labor standards for immigrants and lower wages for all workers. He has stressed these connections in conferences and testimony, including before the California State Board of Food and Agriculture, during a [Cornell University conference on criminalizing immigrants](#), and at a major [farm labor conference](#) at the University of California, Davis. Costa has also made this case at the international level, where he was selected to act as the rapporteur on labor migration at the annual Civil

Society Days of the [Global Forum on Migration and Development](#). He continues to make the case that comprehensive immigration reform must be part of any serious economic policy proposal and that the two are linked, not separate issues.

Attempts to reform a key part of the system—guestworker programs—have long suffered from a lack of data on the number of temporary foreign workers employed in the United States. Costa partnered with Yale Law School’s Jennifer Rosenbaum remedy this data gap with a report estimating that there are [1.42 million guestworkers](#) employed in the country.

We proved that the country does not need to redistribute wealth upward by enacting tax cuts for the wealthy.

As the versions of what became the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) moved through Congress, EPI exposed the act’s many regressive elements in a series of reports and blog posts. Proponents of the TCJA continued to propagate the decades-old myth that the benefits of corporate tax cuts will trickle down to workers in the form of faster productivity growth and higher wages. But EPI has shown that this claim [falls apart](#) in the face of many real-world data points; for one thing, the [historically high level of corporate profits](#) proves we do not need to redistribute wealth upward through the tax code to give corporations funds for productivity-enhancing capital investment—they already have the funds they need.

In addition to the permanent cut in the corporate income tax rate that will overwhelmingly benefit capital owners and the top 1 percent, TCJA includes temporary reductions in the tax rates faced by the richest households and a temporary tax cut for “pass-through” business owners. An [EPI report](#) demonstrated that the pass-through provision—which was marketed as a small business tax cut—will actually deliver an even higher share of benefits [to top one percenters](#) than the corporate rate cuts will. The provision provides for a preferential rate for “pass-through” businesses—businesses that pay no corporate taxes but whose owners must pay taxes on profits on their individual tax returns when those profits are “passed through” to them. But given that [69 percent of pass-through income](#) is claimed by the richest 1 percent of households, the lion’s share of benefits from a preferential pass-through rate will not go to archetypal small businesses like neighborhood stores or day care operations—it will instead go to hedge funds, white-shoe law firms, and consulting and accounting firms. And, notably, almost surely the companies that make up the Trump Organization.

EPI “commemorated” the passage of the act with [Top Charts of 2017](#), which showed that the policy focus of the last year, culminating in the end-of-year passage of massive tax cuts for corporations, addressed nonexistent problems rather than the real problems we face: stagnating wages of American workers who have lost economic leverage, wage and wealth gaps based on race, and unequal educational opportunities for children from lower-income families.

We collaborated with state allies in campaigns for policies that help working people.

EPI produces a range of accessible tools for activists, including fact sheets, interactive calculators and maps, blog posts, infographics, and share graphics. Many of EPI's tools include state-by-state analyses. In the last 18 months, EPI has released accessible, sharable data on the number of workers in each state **who would get a raise if a \$15 federal minimum wage is enacted**; monthly state **unemployment rates by race and ethnicity**; the number of jobs that would be lost in each state **if the ACA were repealed**; the number of households in each state **that cannot afford child care**; **income inequality** by state; **wages lost to wage theft** in the 10 most populous states; and annual **retirement income losses** by state due to financial advisers recommending investment products that benefit themselves rather than their clients (the problem with “conflicted investment advice” that the now-delayed “fiduciary rule” would address).

The data above is distributed to numerous state and national partners, including to the 63 members of EPI's **Economic Analysis and Research Network (EARN)**. EARN operates a Listserv that is heavily used as platform for peer advice and learning, information sharing, and cross-state collaboration. EARN holds an annual conference that is attended by policymakers, activists, and researchers focused on creating a fair economy.

EARN member groups and EARN staff at EPI also have strong relationships with national, state, and local movement-building organizations such as the Center for Popular Democracy, the Center for Community Change, People Improving Communities through Organizing, and National People's Action. EPI also participates as a key provider of data and technical assistance to numerous coalitions, including Fed Up, Working Families Forward, Fair Scheduling Coalition, Preemption Watch, the Federal Minimum Wage Coalition, Americans for Tax Fairness, Save Our Retirement, and the Coalition on Human Needs.

We expanded our collaboration with state advocacy groups in the South.

EARN has launched EARN in the South, a new project to bring together Southern EARN groups and their advocacy partners to develop a cross-state policy and advocacy agenda focused on workers and their families. The group is creating an action plan for a winnable public policy agenda that considers the concerns of workers and their families in the region.

We amplified our message across all forms of media.

EPI amplifies all of the work described above through a range of communications and outreach efforts. As the numerous citations above show, EPI continues to be the go-to

source for economic analysis in the print media. *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Wall Street Journal* turn to EPI's research on a weekly basis and, in the last year (November 2016 to November 2017), EPI was cited nearly 1,500 times by influential news outlets including *The Atlantic*, *Bloomberg*, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *NPR*, *Marketplace*, *USA Today*, and *Politico*. As part of EPI's efforts to reach outside the "bubble," EPI has successfully increased our efforts to reach media in secondary markets and beyond. Local news stories have gotten EPI research into important debates in the states, including in [Minnesota](#), [Texas](#), [Rhode Island](#), [Connecticut](#), [Maryland](#), [North Carolina](#), [Utah](#), [Ohio](#), [Illinois](#), [Florida](#), [Iowa](#), [Montana](#), and [Missouri](#).

In addition, EPI's ability to reach larger and larger audiences with infographics and other accessible and timely information is increasing dramatically as a result of our expanding email list and presence on social media. EPI's Facebook "likes" are now at 115,000 and we now have more than 42,000 Twitter followers. EPI's email list—which we use to reach people with information on new reports, events, blogs, and other releases—has increased by 58 percent from the same time last year, now reaching more than 250,000 people.