



Last year the IRS had 99,123 tax refund checks worth \$153.3 million – an average of \$1547 per taxpayer – returned by the post office as undeliverable, due to unreported changes of name and/or address; down slightly from the previous year, when 111,893 refund checks worth \$165 million went unclaimed. If you've moved since filing your last return, be sure to file IRS Form 8822 – “Change of Address” to avoid this problem in the future. This is particularly important after a death or marriage, and to college students who file a return in the spring using a campus address.

Undeliverable income tax refunds, tax rebates and stimulus checks are but one small component of unclaimed funds held by the IRS. A significantly greater number of checks are delivered, but for one reason or another are never cashed. Estimates are the total amount outstanding is in excess of \$6 billion.

Taxpayers must request reissue if a tax refund check has been lost, destroyed or voided due to the passage of time. U.S. Treasury checks, including those issued by the IRS, are negotiable for one year from the date of issue.

For a search of the IRS undelivered refund database and to obtain recovery and claims information on tax refunds complete the form below.

<https://unclaimed.com/unclaimed-money-searches/irs-tax-refund-search/>

Missing returns, unclaimed refunds and missing children with perplexed instructions & undeliverable, unbelievable or lost revenues for The Lost and Found Govspel of THEIRS



The Lost & Found Gospels of THEIRS

Rob Peter to pay Paul Policies

Meaning:

To take from one merely to give to another; to discharge one debt by incurring another.

The Semblances of Religion, *inter alia*

TAX EXPENDITURES: The Fruits of the Purpose-Driven Life of THEIRS

[Worship] with the etymology of religion lies with the Latin word “*religare*”

The Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (Public Law 93–344) requires that a list of “tax expenditures” be included in the budget. Tax expenditures are defined in the law as “revenue losses attributable to provisions of the Federal tax laws which allow a special exclusion, exemption, or deduction from gross income or which provide a special credit, a preferential rate of tax, or a deferral of tax liability.” These exceptions may be viewed as alternatives to other policy instruments, such as spending or regulatory programs.

Identification and measurement of tax expenditures depends crucially on the baseline tax system against which the actual tax system is compared. The tax expenditure estimates presented in this document are patterned on a comprehensive income tax, which defines income as the sum of consumption and the change in net wealth in a given period of time.

An important assumption underlying each tax expenditure estimate reported below is that other parts of the Tax Code remain unchanged. The estimates would be different if tax expenditures were changed simultaneously because of potential interactions among provisions. For that reason, this document does not present a grand total for the estimated tax expenditures.

Tax expenditures relating to the individual and corporate income taxes are estimated for fiscal years 2014–2024 using two methods of accounting: current revenue effects and present value effects. The present value approach provides estimates of the revenue effects for tax expenditures that generally involve deferrals of tax payments into the future.

TAX EXPENDITURES IN THE INCOME TAX

Tax Expenditure Estimates

All tax expenditure estimates presented here are based upon current tax law enacted as of July 1, 2014. In some cases, expired or repealed provisions are listed if their revenue effects occur in fiscal year 2014 or later. The estimates are based on the economic assumptions from the Mid-Session Review of the 2015 Budget.

The total revenue effects for tax expenditures for fiscal years 2014–2024 are displayed according to the Budget’s functional categories in Table 1. Descriptions of the specific tax expenditure provisions follow the discussion of general features of the tax expenditure concept.

Two baseline concepts—the normal tax baseline and the reference tax law baseline—are used to identify and estimate tax expenditures.¹ For the most part, the two concepts coincide. However, items treated as tax expenditures under the normal tax baseline, but not the reference tax law baseline, are indicated by the designation “normal tax method” in the tables. The revenue effects for these items are zero using the reference tax rules. The alternative baseline concepts are discussed in detail below.

Tables 2A and 2B report separately the respective portions of the total revenue effects that arise under the individual and corporate income taxes. The location of the estimates under the individual and corporate headings does not imply that these categories of filers benefit from the special tax provisions in proportion to the respective tax expenditure amounts shown. Rather, these breakdowns show the form of tax liability that the various provisions affect. The ultimate beneficiaries of corporate tax expenditures could be shareholders, employees, customers, or other providers of capital, depending on economic forces.

Table 3 ranks the major tax expenditures by the size of their 2015–2024 revenue effect. The first column provides the number of the provision in order to cross reference this table to Tables 1, 2A, and 2B, as well as to the descriptions below.

Interpreting Tax Expenditure Estimates

The estimates shown for individual tax expenditures in Tables 1 through 3 do not necessarily equal the increase in Federal revenues (or the change in the budget balance) that would result from repealing these special provisions, for the following reasons.

First, eliminating a tax expenditure may have incentive effects that alter economic behavior. These incentives can affect the resulting magnitudes of the activity or of other tax provisions or Government programs. For example, if capital gains were taxed at ordinary rates, capital gain realizations would be expected to decline, resulting in lower tax receipts. Such behavioral effects are not reflected in the estimates.

Second, tax expenditures are interdependent even without incentive effects. Repeal of a tax expenditure provision can increase or decrease the tax revenues associated with other provisions. For example, even if behavior does not change, repeal of an itemized deduction could increase the revenue costs from other deductions because some taxpayers would be moved into higher tax brackets. Alternatively, repeal of an itemized deduction could lower the revenue cost from other deductions if taxpayers are led to claim the standard deduction instead of itemizing. Similarly, if two provisions were repealed simultaneously, the increase in tax liability could be greater or less than the sum of the two separate tax expenditures, because each is estimated assuming that the other remains in force. In addition, the estimates reported in Table 1 are the totals of individual and corporate income tax revenue effects reported in Tables 2A and 2B, and do not reflect any possible interactions between individual and corporate income tax receipts. For this reason, the estimates in Table 1 should be regarded as approximations.

Present-Value Estimates

The annual value of tax expenditures for tax deferrals is reported on a cash basis in all tables except Table 4. Cash-based estimates reflect the difference between taxes deferred in the current year and incoming revenues that are received due to deferrals of taxes from prior years. Although such estimates are useful as a measure of cash flows into the Government, they do not accurately reflect the true economic cost of these provisions. For example, for a provision where activity levels have changed over time, so that incoming tax receipts from past deferrals are greater than deferred receipts from new activity, the cash-basis tax expenditure estimate can be negative, despite the fact that in present-value terms current deferrals have a real cost to the Government. Alternatively, in the case of a newly enacted deferral provision, a cash-based estimate can overstate the real effect on receipts to the Government because the newly deferred taxes will ultimately be received.

Discounted present-value estimates of revenue effects are presented in Table 4 for certain provisions that involve tax deferrals or other long-term revenue effects. These estimates complement the cash-based tax expenditure estimates presented in the other tables.

The present-value estimates represent the revenue effects, net of future tax payments that follow from activities undertaken during calendar year 2014 which cause the deferrals or other long-term revenue effects. For instance, a pension contribution in 2014 would cause a deferral of tax payments on wages in 2014 and on pension fund earnings on this contribution (e.g., interest) in later years. In some future year, however, the 2014 pension contribution and accrued earnings will be paid out and taxes will be due; these receipts are included in the present-value estimate. In general, this conceptual approach is similar to the one used for reporting the budgetary effects of credit programs, where direct loans and guarantees in a given year affect future cash flows.

Tax Expenditure Baselines

A tax expenditure is an exception to baseline provisions of the tax structure that usually results in a reduction in the amount of tax owed. The 1974 Congressional Budget Act, which mandated the tax expenditure budget, did not specify the baseline provisions of the tax law. As noted previously, deciding whether provisions are exceptions, therefore, is a matter of judgment. As in prior years, most of this year's tax expenditure estimates are presented using two baselines: the normal tax baseline and the reference tax law baseline. Tax expenditures may take the form of credits, deductions, special exceptions and allowances.

The normal tax baseline is patterned on a practical variant of a comprehensive income tax, which defines income as the sum of consumption and the change in net wealth in a given period of time. The normal tax baseline allows personal exemptions, a standard deduction, and deduction of expenses incurred in earning income. It is not limited to a particular structure of tax rates, or by a specific definition of the taxpaying unit.

The reference tax law baseline is also patterned on a comprehensive income tax, but it is closer to existing law. Reference law tax expenditures are limited to special exceptions from a generally provided tax rule that serve programmatic functions in a way that is analogous to spending programs. Provisions under the reference law baseline are generally tax expenditures under the normal tax baseline, but the reverse is not always true.

Both the normal and reference tax baselines allow several major departures from a pure comprehensive income tax. For example, under the normal and reference tax baselines:

- Income is taxable only when it is realized in exchange. Thus, the deferral of tax on unrealized capital gains is not regarded as a tax expenditure. Accrued income would be taxed under a comprehensive income tax.
- There is a separate corporate income tax.
- Tax rates on noncorporate business income vary by level of income.
- Individual tax rates, including brackets, standard deduction, and personal exemptions, are allowed to vary with marital status.
- Values of assets and debt are not generally adjusted for inflation. A comprehensive income tax would adjust the cost basis of capital assets and debt for changes in the general price level. Thus, under a comprehensive income tax baseline, the failure to take account of inflation in measuring depreciation, capital gains, and interest income would be regarded as a negative tax expenditure (i.e., a tax penalty), and failure to take account of inflation in measuring interest costs would be regarded as a positive tax expenditure (i.e., a tax subsidy).

Although the reference law and normal tax baselines are generally similar, areas of difference include:

Tax rates. The separate schedules applying to the various taxpaying units are included in the reference law baseline. Thus, corporate tax rates below the maximum statutory rate do not give rise to a tax expenditure. The normal tax baseline is similar, except that, by convention, it specifies the current maximum rate as the baseline for the corporate income tax. The lower tax rates applied to the first \$10 million of corporate income are thus regarded as a tax expenditure under the normal tax. By convention, the Alternative Minimum Tax is treated as part of the baseline rate structure under both the reference and normal tax methods.

Income subject to the tax. Income subject to tax is defined as gross income less the costs of earning that income. Under the reference tax rules, gross income does not include gifts defined as receipts of money or property that are not consideration in an exchange nor does gross income include most transfer payments from the Government.² The normal tax baseline also excludes gifts between individuals from gross income. Under the normal tax baseline, however, all cash transfer payments from the Government to private individuals are counted in gross income, and exemptions of such transfers from tax are identified as tax expenditures. The costs of earning income are generally deductible in determining taxable income under both the reference and normal tax baselines.³

Capital recovery. Under the reference tax law baseline no tax expenditures arise from accelerated depreciation. Under the normal tax baseline, the depreciation allowance for property is computed using estimates of economic depreciation.

Treatment of foreign income. Both the normal and reference tax baselines allow a tax credit for foreign income taxes paid (up to the amount of U.S. income taxes that would otherwise be due), which prevents double taxation of income earned abroad. Under the normal tax method, however, controlled foreign corporations (CFCs) are not regarded as entities separate from their controlling U.S. shareholders. Thus, the deferral of tax on income received by CFCs is regarded as a tax expenditure under this method. In contrast, except for tax haven activities, the reference law baseline follows current law in treating CFCs as separate taxable entities whose income is not subject to U.S. tax until distributed to U.S. taxpayers. Under this baseline, deferral of tax on CFC income is not a tax expenditure because U.S. taxpayers generally are not taxed on accrued, but unrealized, income.

Descriptions of Income Tax Provisions

Descriptions of the individual and corporate income tax expenditures reported on in this document follow. These descriptions relate to current law as of July 1, 2014.

National Defense

1. **Exclusion of benefits and allowances to armed forces personnel.**—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income because they represent accretions to wealth that do not materially differ from cash wages. As an example, a rental voucher of \$100 is (approximately) equal in value to \$100 of cash income. In contrast to this treatment, certain housing and meals, in addition to other benefits provided military personnel, either in cash or in kind, as well as certain amounts of pay related to combat service, are excluded from income subject to tax.

2. **Exclusion of income earned abroad by U.S. citizens.** — Under the baseline tax system, all compensation received by U.S. citizens and residents is properly included in their taxable income. It makes no difference whether the compensation is a result of working abroad or whether it is labeled as a housing allowance. In contrast to this treatment, U.S. tax law allows U.S. citizens and residents who live abroad, work in the private sector, and satisfy a foreign residency requirement to exclude up to \$80,000, plus adjustments for inflation since 2004 (\$99,200 in 2014), in foreign earned income from U.S. taxes. In addition, if these taxpayers are provided housing by their employers, then they may also exclude the cost of such housing from their income to the extent that it exceeds 16 percent of the earned income exclusion limit. This housing exclusion is capped at 30 percent of the earned income exclusion limit,

with geographical adjustments. If taxpayers do not receive a specific allowance for housing expenses, they may deduct housing expenses up to the amount by which foreign earned income exceeds their foreign earned income exclusion.

3. Exclusion of certain allowances for Federal employees' abroad.—In general, all compensation received by U.S. citizens and residents is properly included in their taxable income. It makes no difference whether the compensation is a result of working abroad or whether it is labeled as an allowance for the high cost of living abroad. In contrast to this treatment, U.S. Federal civilian employees and Peace Corps members who work outside the continental United States are allowed to exclude from U.S. taxable income certain special allowances they receive to compensate them for the relatively high costs associated with living overseas. The allowances supplement wage income and cover expenses such as rent, education, and the cost of travel to and from the United States.

4. Inventory property sales source rules exception.—The United States generally taxes the worldwide income of U.S. persons and business entities. Under the baseline tax system, taxpayers receive a credit for foreign taxes paid which is limited to the pre-credit U.S. tax on the foreign source income. In contrast, the sales source rules for inventory property under current law allow U.S. exporters to use more foreign tax credits by allowing the exporters to attribute a larger portion of their earnings to foreign sources than would be the case if the allocation of earnings was based on actual economic activity.

5. Gross income does, however, include transfer payments associated with past employment, such as Social Security benefits. In the case of individuals who hold “passive” equity interests in businesses, the pro-rata shares of sales and expense deductions reportable in a year are limited. A passive business activity is defined generally to be one in which the holder of the interest, usually a partnership interest, does not actively perform managerial or other participatory functions. The taxpayer may generally report no larger deductions for a year than will reduce taxable income from such activities to zero. Deductions in excess of the limitation may be taken in subsequent years, or when the interest is liquidated. In addition, costs of earning income may be limited under the Alternative Minimum Tax.

6. Deferral of income from controlled foreign corporations (normal tax method). — Under the baseline tax system, the United States generally taxes the worldwide income of U.S. persons and business entities. In contrast, certain active income of foreign corporations controlled by U.S. shareholders is not subject to U.S. taxation when it is earned. The income becomes taxable only when the controlling U.S. shareholders receive dividends or other distributions from their foreign stockholding. The reference law tax baseline reflects this tax treatment where only realized income is taxed. Under the normal tax method, however, the currently attributable foreign source pre-tax income from such a controlling interest is considered to be subject to U.S. taxation, whether or not distributed. Thus, the normal tax method considers the amount of controlled foreign corporation income not yet distributed to a U.S. shareholder as tax-deferred income. Deferred taxes for financial firms on certain income earned overseas.—The United States generally taxes the worldwide income of U.S. persons and business entities. The baseline tax system would not allow the deferral of tax or other relief targeted at particular industries or activities. In contrast, the Tax Code allowed financial firms to defer taxes on income earned overseas in an active business. This provision expired at the end of 2013.

General Science, Space, and Technology

7. Expensing of research and experimentation expenditures (normal tax method).— The baseline tax system allows a deduction for the cost of producing income. It requires taxpayers to capitalize the costs associated with investments over time to better match the streams of income and associated costs. Research and experimentation (R&E) projects can be viewed as investments because, if successful, their benefits accrue for several years. It is often difficult, however, to identify whether a specific R&E project is successful and, if successful, what its expected life will be. Because of this ambiguity, the reference law baseline tax system would allow expensing of

R&E expenditures. In contrast, under the normal tax method, the expensing of R&E expenditures is viewed as a tax expenditure. The baseline assumed for the normal tax method is that all R&E expenditures are successful and have an expected life of five years.

8. Credit for increasing research activities.—The baseline tax system would uniformly tax all returns to investments and not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. In contrast, the Tax Code allowed an R&E credit of up to 20 percent of qualified research expenditures in excess of a base amount. The base amount of the credit was generally determined by multiplying a “fixed-base percentage” by the average amount of the company’s gross receipts for the prior four years. The taxpayer’s fixed base percentage generally was the ratio of its research expenses to gross receipts for 1984 through 1988. Taxpayers could elect the alternative simplified credit regime, which equaled 14 percent of qualified research expenses that exceeded 50 percent of the average qualified research expenses for the three preceding taxable years. The credit does not apply to expenses paid or incurred after December 31, 2013.

Energy

9. Expensing of exploration and development costs.—Under the baseline tax system, the costs of exploring and developing oil and gas wells would be capitalized and then amortized (or depreciated) over an estimate of the economic life of the well. This insures that the net income from the well is measured appropriately each year.

In contrast to this treatment, current law allows intangible drilling costs for successful investments in domestic oil and gas wells (such as wages, the cost of using machinery for grading and drilling, and the cost of unsalvageable materials used in constructing wells) to be deducted immediately, i.e., expensed. Because it allows recovery of costs sooner, expensing is more generous for the taxpayer than would be amortization. Integrated oil companies may deduct only 70 percent of such costs and must amortize the remaining 30 percent over five years. Non-integrated oil companies may expense all such costs. The same rule applies to the exploration and development costs of surface stripping and the construction of shafts and tunnels for other fuel minerals.

10. Excess of percentage over cost depletion.— The baseline tax system would allow recovery of the costs of developing certain oil and mineral properties using cost depletion. Cost depletion is similar in concept to depreciation, in that the costs of developing or acquiring the asset are capitalized and then gradually reduced over an estimate of the asset’s economic life, as is appropriate for measuring net income.

In contrast, the Tax Code generally allows independent fuel and mineral producers and royalty owners to take percentage depletion deductions rather than cost depletion on limited quantities of output. Under percentage depletion, taxpayers deduct a percentage of gross income from mineral production. In certain cases the deduction is limited to a fraction of the asset’s net income. Over the life of an investment, percentage depletion deductions can exceed the cost of the investment. Consequently, percentage depletion offers more generous tax treatment than would cost depletion, which would limit deductions to an investment’s cost.

11. Alternative fuel production credit. — The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. Instead, it generally would seek to tax uniformly all returns from investment-like activities. In contrast, the Tax Code provided a credit of \$3 per oil-equivalent barrel of production (in 2004 dollars) for coke or coke gas during a four-year period for qualified facilities. Qualifying facilities producing coke and coke gas must have been placed in service by December 31, 2009.

12. Exception from passive loss limitation for working interests in oil and gas properties. — The baseline tax system accepts current law’s general rule limiting taxpayers’ ability to deduct losses from passive activities against nonpassive income (e.g., wages, interest, and dividends). Passive activities generally are defined as those in which the taxpayer does not materially participate, and there are numerous additional considerations brought to bear on the

determination of which activities are passive for a given taxpayer. Losses are limited in an attempt to limit tax sheltering activities. Passive losses that are unused may be carried forward and applied against future passive income.

An exception from the passive loss limitation is provided for a working interest in an oil or gas property that the taxpayer holds directly or through an entity that does not limit the liability of the taxpayer with respect to the interest. Thus, taxpayers can deduct losses from such working interests against nonpassive income without regard to whether they materially participate in the activity.

13. Capital gains treatment of royalties on coal.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. For individuals in 2014, tax rates on regular income vary from 10 percent to 39.6 percent, depending on the taxpayer's income. In contrast, current law allows capital gains realized by individuals to be taxed at a preferentially low rate that is no higher than 20 percent. Certain sales of coal under royalty contracts qualify for taxation as capital gains rather than ordinary income, and so benefit from the preferentially low 20 percent maximum tax rate on capital gains.

14. Exclusion of interest on energy facility bonds.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, the Tax Code allows interest earned on State and local bonds used to finance construction of certain energy facilities to be exempt from tax. These bonds are generally subject to the State private-activity-bond annual volume cap.

15. Energy production credit.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. Instead, it generally would seek to tax uniformly all returns from investment-like activities. In contrast, the Tax Code provides a credit for certain electricity produced from wind energy, biomass, geothermal energy, solar energy, small irrigation power, municipal solid waste, or qualified hydropower and sold to an unrelated party. Qualified facilities must have begun construction before January 1, 2014. In addition to the electricity production credit, an income tax credit is allowed for the production of refined coal for facilities placed in service before January 1, 2012. The Tax Code also provided an income tax credit for Indian coal facilities placed in service before January 1, 2009. The Indian coal facilities credit expired on December 31, 2013.

16. Energy investment credit.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. Instead, it generally would seek to tax uniformly all returns from investment-like activities. However, the Tax Code provides credits for investments in solar and geothermal energy property, qualified fuel cell power plants, stationary microturbine power plants, geothermal heat pumps, small wind property and combined heat and power property. A temporary credit of up to 30 percent is available for qualified property placed in service before January 1, 2017. A permanent 10 percent credit is available for qualified solar and geothermal property placed in service after this date. Owners of renewable power facilities that qualify for the energy production credit may instead elect to take an energy investment credit.

17. Alcohol fuel credits.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. Instead, it generally would seek to tax uniformly all returns from investment-like activities. In contrast, the Tax Code provided an income tax credit for qualified cellulosic biofuel production which was renamed the Second generation biofuel producer credit. This provision expired on December 31, 2013.

18. Bio-Diesel and small agri-biodiesel producer tax credits.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. Instead, it generally would seek to tax uniformly all returns from investment-like activities. 5

However, the Tax Code allowed an income tax credit for bio-diesel and for bio-diesel derived from virgin sources. In lieu of the bio-diesel credit, the taxpayer could claim a refundable excise tax credit. In addition, small agri-biodiesel producers were eligible for a separate income tax credit for biodiesel production and a separate credit was available for qualified renewable diesel fuel mixtures. This provision expired on December 31, 2013.

19. Tax credits for clean-fuel burning vehicles and refueling property.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits or deductions for particular activities, investments, or industries. Instead, it generally would seek to tax uniformly all returns from investment-like activities. In contrast, the Tax Code allows a number of credits for certain types of vehicles and property. These are available for hydrogen vehicle refueling property, fuel cell vehicles, and plug-in electric-drive motor vehicles. Credits for two- and three-wheeled plug-in electric vehicles and non-hydrogen alternative fuel vehicle refueling property expired on December 31, 2013.

20. Exclusion of utility conservation subsidies.—The baseline tax system generally takes a comprehensive view of taxable income that includes a wide variety of (measurable) accretions to wealth. In certain circumstances, public utilities offer rate subsidies to non-business customers who invest in energy conservation measures. These rate subsidies are equivalent to payments from the utility to its customer, and so represent accretions to wealth, income that would be taxable to the customer under the baseline tax system. In contrast, the Tax Code exempts these subsidies from the non-business customer's gross income.

21. Credit for holding clean renewable energy bonds.—The baseline tax system would uniformly tax all returns to investments and not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. In contrast, the Tax Code provides for the issuance of Clean Renewable Energy Bonds which entitles the bond holder to a Federal income tax credit in lieu of interest. The limit on the volume authorized in 2009–2010 is \$2.4 billion. As of March 2010, issuers of the unused authorization of such bonds could opt to receive direct payment with the yield becoming fully taxable.

22. Deferral of gain from dispositions of transmission property to implement FERC restructuring policy.—The baseline tax system generally would tax gains from sale of property when realized. It would not allow an exception for particular activities or individuals. However, the Tax Code allowed electric utilities to defer gains from the sale of their transmission assets to a FERC-approved independent transmission company. The sale of property must have been made prior to January 1, 2014.

23. Credit for investment in clean coal facilities.—The baseline tax system would uniformly tax all returns to investments and not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. In contrast, the Tax Code provides investment tax credits for clean coal facilities producing electricity and for industrial gasification combined cycle projects.

24. Temporary 50 percent expensing for equipment used in the refining of liquid fuels.—The baseline tax system allows the taxpayer to deduct the decline in the economic value of an investment over its economic life. However, the Tax Code provided for an accelerated recovery of the cost of certain investments in refineries by allowing partial expensing of the cost, thereby giving such investments a tax advantage. Qualified refinery property must have been placed in service before January 1, 2014.

25. Natural gas distribution pipelines treated as 15-year property.—The baseline tax system allows taxpayers to deduct the decline in the economic value of an investment over its economic life. However, the Tax Code allows depreciation of natural gas distribution pipelines (placed in service between 2005 and 2011) over a 15 year period. These deductions are accelerated relative to deductions based on economic depreciation.

26. Amortize all geological and geophysical expenditures over two years.—The baseline tax system allows taxpayers to deduct the decline in the economic value of an investment over its economic life. However, the Tax Code allows geological and geophysical expenditures incurred in connection with oil and gas exploration in the

United States to be amortized over two years for non-integrated oil companies, a span of time that is generally shorter than the economic life of the assets.

27. Allowance of deduction for certain energy efficient commercial building property.—The baseline tax system would not allow deductions in addition to normal depreciation allowances for particular investments in particular industries. Instead, it generally would seek to tax uniformly all returns from investment-like activities. In contrast, the Tax Code allowed a deduction, per square foot, for certain energy efficient commercial buildings. This provision expired on December 31, 2013.

28. Credit for construction of new energy efficient homes.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. Instead, it generally would seek to tax uniformly all returns from investment-like activities. However, the Tax Code allowed contractors a tax credit of \$2,000 for the construction of a qualified new energy-efficient home that had an annual level of heating and cooling energy consumption at least 50 percent below the annual consumption under the 2006 International Energy Conservation Code. The credit equaled \$1,000 in the case of a new manufactured home that met a 30 percent standard or requirements for EPA's Energy Star homes. This provision expired on December 31, 2013.

29. Credit for energy efficiency improvements to existing homes.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. However, the Tax Code provided an investment tax credit for expenditures made on insulation, exterior windows, and doors that improved the energy efficiency of homes and met certain standards. The Tax Code also provided a credit for purchases of advanced main air circulating fans, natural gas, propane, or oil furnaces or hot water boilers, and other qualified energy efficient property. This provision expired on December 31, 2013.

30. Credit for energy efficient appliances.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. Instead, it generally would seek to tax uniformly all returns from investment-like activities. In contrast, the Tax Code provided tax credits for the manufacture of efficient dishwashers, clothes washers, and refrigerators. The size of the credit depended on the efficiency of the appliance. This provision expired on December 31, 2013.

31. Credit for residential energy efficient property.—The baseline tax system would uniformly tax all returns to investments and not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. However, the Tax Code provides a credit for the purchase of a qualified photovoltaic property and solar water heating property, as well as for fuel cell power plants, geothermal heat pumps and small wind property.

32. Credit for qualified energy conservation bonds.—The baseline tax system would uniformly tax all returns to investments and not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. However, the Tax Code provides for the issuance of energy conservation bonds which entitle the bond holder to a Federal income tax credit in lieu of interest. The limit on the volume issued in 2009–2010 is \$3.2 billion. As of March 2010, issuers of the unused authorization of such bonds could opt to receive direct payment with the yield becoming fully taxable.

33. Advanced energy property credit.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. However, the Tax Code provides a 30 percent investment credit for property used in a qualified advanced energy manufacturing project. The Treasury Department may award up to \$2.3 billion in tax credits for qualified investments.

34. Advanced nuclear power facilities production credit.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits or deductions for particular activities, investments, or industries. Instead, it generally would seek to tax uniformly all returns from investment-like activities. In contrast, the Tax Code allows a tax credit equal to 1.8 cents times the number of kilowatt hours of electricity produced at a qualifying advanced nuclear power facility. A taxpayer may

claim no more than \$125 million per 1,000 megawatts of capacity. The Treasury Department may allocate up to 6,000 megawatts of credit-eligible capacity.

Natural Resources and Environment

35. Expensing of exploration and development costs.—The baseline tax system allows the taxpayer to deduct the depreciation of an asset according to the decline in its economic value over time. However, certain capital outlays associated with exploration and development of nonfuel minerals may be expensed rather than depreciated over the life of the asset.

36. Excess of percentage over cost depletion.—The baseline tax system allows the taxpayer to deduct the decline in the economic value of an investment over time. Under current law, however, most nonfuel mineral extractors may use percentage depletion (whereby the deduction is fixed as a percentage of revenue) rather than cost depletion, with percentage depletion rates ranging from 22 percent for sulfur to 5 percent for sand and gravel. Over the life of an investment, percentage depletion deductions can exceed the cost of the investment. Consequently, percentage depletion offers more generous tax treatment than would cost depletion, which would limit deductions to an investment's cost.

37. Exclusion of interest on bonds for water, sewage, and hazardous waste facilities.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, the Tax Code allows interest earned on State and local bonds used to finance construction of sewage, water, or hazardous waste facilities to be exempt from tax. These bonds are generally subject to the State private-activity-bond annual volume cap.

38. Capital gains treatment of certain timber.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. However, under current law certain timber sales can be treated as a capital gain rather than ordinary income and therefore subject to the lower capital-gains tax rate. For individuals in 2014, tax rates on regular income vary from 10 percent to 39.6 percent, depending on the taxpayer's income. In contrast, current law allows capital gains to be taxed at a preferentially low rate that is no higher than 20 percent.

39. Expensing of multi-period timber growing costs.—The baseline tax system requires the taxpayer to capitalize costs associated with investment property. However, most of the production costs of growing timber may be expensed under current law rather than capitalized and deducted when the timber is sold, thereby accelerating cost recovery.

40. Tax incentives for preservation of historic structures.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. However, expenditures to preserve and restore certified historic structures qualify for an investment tax credit of 20 percent under current law for certified rehabilitation activities. The taxpayer's recoverable basis must be reduced by the amount of the credit.

41. Industrial CO₂ capture and sequestration tax credit.—The baseline tax system would uniformly tax all returns to investments and not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. In contrast, the Tax Code allows a credit of \$20 per metric ton for qualified carbon dioxide captured at a qualified facility and disposed of in secure geological storage. In addition, the provision allows a credit of \$10 per metric ton of qualified carbon dioxide that is captured at a qualified facility and used as a tertiary injectant in a qualified enhanced oil or natural gas recovery project.

42. Deduction for endangered species recovery expenditures.—The baseline tax system would not allow deductions in addition to normal depreciation allowances for particular investments in particular industries. Instead, it generally would seek to tax uniformly all returns from investment-like activities. In contrast, under current law

farmers can deduct up to 25 percent of their gross income for expenses incurred as a result of site and habitat improvement activities that will benefit endangered species on their farm land, in accordance with site specific management actions included in species recovery plans approved pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Agriculture

43. **Expensing of certain capital outlays.**—The baseline tax system requires the taxpayer to capitalize costs associated with investment property. However, farmers may expense certain expenditures for feed and fertilizer, for soil and water conservation measures and certain other capital improvements under current law.

44. **Expensing of certain multiperiod production costs.**—The baseline tax system requires the taxpayer to capitalize costs associated with an investment over time. However, the production of livestock and crops with a production period greater than two years (e.g., establishing orchards or constructing barns) is exempt from the uniform cost capitalization rules, thereby accelerating cost recovery.

45. **Treatment of loans forgiven for solvent farmers.**—Because loan forgiveness increases a debtors net worth the baseline tax system requires debtors to include the amount of loan forgiveness as income or else reduce their recoverable basis in the property related to the loan. If the amount of forgiveness exceeds the basis, the excess forgiveness is taxable if the taxpayer is not insolvent. For bankrupt debtors, the amount of loan forgiveness reduces carryover losses, unused credits, and then basis, with the remainder of the forgiven debt excluded from taxation. Qualified farm debt that is forgiven, however, is excluded from income even when the taxpayer is solvent.

46. **Capital gains treatment of certain income.**—For individuals in 2014, tax rates on regular income vary from 10 percent to 39.6 percent, depending on the taxpayer's income. The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, current law allows capital gains to be taxed at a preferentially low rate that is no higher than 20 percent. Certain agricultural income, such as unharvested crops, qualify for taxation as capital gains rather than ordinary income, and so benefit from the preferentially low 20 percent maximum tax rate on capital gains.

47. **Income averaging for farmers.**—The baseline tax system generally taxes all earned income each year at the rate determined by the income tax. However, taxpayers may average their taxable income from farming and fishing over the previous three years.

48. **Deferral of gain on sales of farm refiners.**—The baseline tax system generally subjects capital gains to taxes the year that they are realized. However, the Tax Code allows a taxpayer who sells stock in a farm refiner to a farmers' cooperative to defer recognition of the gain if the proceeds are re-invested in a qualified replacement property.

49. **Expensing of reforestation expenditures.**—The baseline tax system requires the taxpayer to capitalize costs associated with an investment over time. In contrast, the Tax Code provides for the expensing of the first \$10,000 in reforestation expenditures with 7-year amortization of the remaining expenses.

Commerce and Housing

This category includes a number of tax expenditure provisions that also affect economic activity in other functional categories. For example, provisions related to investment, such as accelerated depreciation, could be classified under the energy, natural resources and environment, agriculture, or transportation categories.

50. Exemption of credit union income.—Under the baseline tax system, corporations pay taxes on their profits under the regular tax rate schedule. However, in the Tax Code the earnings of credit unions not distributed to members as interest or dividends are exempt from the income tax.

51. Exclusion of interest on life insurance savings.—Under the baseline tax system, individuals and corporations pay taxes on their income when it is (actually or constructively) received or accrued, depending on their method of accounting. Nevertheless, the Tax Code provides favorable tax treatment for investment income earned within qualified life insurance and annuity contracts. In general, investment income earned on qualified life insurance contracts held until death is permanently exempt from income tax. Investment income distributed prior to the death of the insured is tax-exempt to the extent that investment in the contract is overstated (because premiums paid for the cost of life insurance protection are credited to investment in the contract), while the remaining distributed amounts are tax-deferred because income is not taxed on a current basis, but is recognized only when distributed from the contract. Investment income earned on annuities benefits from tax deferral.

52. Special alternative tax on small property and casualty insurance companies.—Under the baseline tax system, corporations pay taxes on their profits under the regular tax rate schedule. The baseline tax system would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. Under current law, however, stock non-life insurance companies are generally exempt from tax if their gross receipts for the taxable year do not exceed \$600,000 and more than 50 percent of such gross receipts consist of premiums. Mutual non-life insurance companies are generally tax-exempt if their annual gross receipts do not exceed \$150,000 and more than 35 percent of gross receipts consist of premiums. Also, non-life insurance companies with no more than \$1.2 million of annual net premiums may elect to pay tax only on their taxable investment income.

53. Tax exemption of certain insurance companies owned by tax-exempt organizations.—Under the baseline tax system, corporations pay taxes on their profits under the regular tax rate schedule. The baseline tax system would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. Generally the income generated by life and property and casualty insurance companies is subject to tax, albeit by special rules. Insurance operations conducted by such exempt organizations as fraternal societies, voluntary employee benefit associations, and others, however, are exempt from tax.

54. Small life insurance company deduction.—Under the baseline tax system, corporations pay taxes on their profits under the regular tax rate schedule. The baseline tax system would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. However, under current law small life insurance companies (with gross assets of less than \$500 million) can deduct 60 percent of the first \$3 million of otherwise taxable income. The deduction phases out for otherwise taxable income between \$3 million and \$15 million.

55. Exclusion of interest spread of financial institutions.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. Consumers and non-profit organizations pay for some deposit-linked services, such as check cashing, by accepting a below-market interest rate on their demand deposits. If they received a market rate of interest on those deposits and paid explicit fees for the associated services, they would pay taxes on the full market rate and (unlike businesses) could not deduct the fees. The Government thus foregoes tax on the difference between the risk-free market interest rate and below-market interest rates on demand deposits, which under competitive conditions should equal the value added of deposit services.

56. Exclusion of interest on owner-occupied mortgage subsidy bonds.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, the Tax Code allows interest earned on State and local bonds used to finance homes purchased by first-time, low-to-moderate-income buyers to be exempt from tax. These bonds are generally subject to the State private-activity-bond annual volume cap.

57. Exclusion of interest on rental housing bonds.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, the Tax Code allows interest earned on State and local government bonds used to finance multifamily rental housing projects to be tax-exempt.

58. Mortgage interest expense on owner-occupied residences.—Under the baseline tax system, expenses incurred in earning income would be deductible. However, such expenses would not be deductible when the income or the return on an investment is not taxed. In contrast, the Tax Code allows an exclusion from a taxpayer's taxable income for the value of owner-occupied housing services and also allows the owner-occupant to deduct mortgage interest paid on his or her primary residence and one secondary residence as an itemized non-business deduction. In general, the mortgage interest deduction is limited to interest on debt no greater than the owner's basis in the residence, and is also limited to interest on debt of no more than \$1 million. Interest on up to \$100,000 of other debt secured by a lien on a principal or second residence is also deductible, irrespective of the purpose of borrowing, provided the total debt does not exceed the fair market value of the residence. As an alternative to the deduction, holders of qualified Mortgage Credit Certificates issued by State or local governmental units or agencies may claim a tax credit equal to a proportion of their interest expense.

59. Deduction for property taxes on real property.—Under the baseline tax system, expenses incurred in earning income would be deductible. However, such expenses would not be deductible when the income or the return on an investment is not taxed. In contrast, the Tax Code allows an exclusion from a taxpayer's taxable income for the value of owner-occupied housing services and also allows the owner-occupant to deduct property taxes paid on real property.

60. Deferral of income from installment sales.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates, or deferral of tax, to apply to certain types or sources of income. Dealers in real and personal property (i.e., sellers who regularly hold property for sale or resale) cannot defer taxable income from installment sales until the receipt of the loan repayment. Nondealers (i.e., sellers of real property used in their business) are required to pay interest on deferred taxes attributable to their total installment obligations in excess of \$5 million. Only properties with sales prices exceeding \$150,000 are includable in the total. The payment of a market rate of interest eliminates the benefit of the tax deferral. The tax exemption for nondealers with total installment obligations of less than \$5 million is, therefore, a tax expenditure.

61. Capital gains exclusion on home sales.—The baseline tax system would not allow deductions and exemptions for certain types of income. In contrast, the Tax Code allows homeowners to exclude from gross income up to \$250,000 (\$500,000 in the case of a married couple filing a joint return) of the capital gains from the sale of a principal residence. To qualify, the taxpayer must have owned and used the property as the taxpayer's principal residence for a total of at least two of the five years preceding the date of sale. In addition, the exclusion may not be used more than once every two years.

62. Exclusion of net imputed rental income.—Under the baseline tax system, the taxable income of a taxpayer who is an owner-occupant would include the implicit value of gross rental income on housing services earned on the investment in owner-occupied housing and would allow a deduction for expenses, such as interest, depreciation, property taxes, and other costs, associated with earning such rental income. In contrast, the Tax Code allows an exclusion from taxable income for the implicit gross rental income on housing services, while in certain circumstances allows a deduction for some costs associated with such income, such as for mortgage interest and property taxes.

63. Exception from passive loss rules for \$25,000 of rental loss.—The baseline tax system accepts current law's general rule limiting taxpayers' ability to deduct losses from passive activities against nonpassive income (e.g., wages, interest, and dividends). Passive activities generally are defined as those in which the taxpayer does not

materially participate and there are numerous additional considerations brought to bear on the determination of which activities are passive for a given taxpayer. Losses are limited in an attempt to limit tax sheltering activities. Passive losses that are unused may be carried forward and applied against future passive income. In contrast to the general restrictions on passive losses, the Tax Code exempts owners of rental real estate activities from “passive income” limitations. The exemption is limited to \$25,000 in losses and phases out for taxpayers with income between \$100,000 and \$150,000.

64. Credit for low-income housing investments.—The baseline tax system would uniformly tax all returns to investments and not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. However, under current law taxpayers who invest in certain low-income housing are eligible for a tax credit. The credit rate is set so that the present value of the credit is equal to 70 percent for new construction and 30 percent for (1) housing receiving other Federal benefits (such as tax-exempt bond financing), or (2) substantially rehabilitated existing housing. The credit can exceed these levels in certain statutorily defined and State designated areas where project development costs are higher. The credit is allowed in equal amounts over 10 years and is generally subject to a volume cap.

65. Accelerated depreciation on rental housing.—Under an economic income tax, the costs of acquiring a building are capitalized and depreciated over time in accordance with the decline in the property’s economic value due to wear and tear or obsolescence. This insures that the net income from the rental property is measured appropriately each year. Current law allows depreciation that is accelerated relative to economic depreciation. However, the depreciation provisions of the Tax Code are part of the reference law rules, and thus do not give rise to tax expenditures under reference law. Under normal law, in contrast, depreciation allowances reflect estimates of economic depreciation.

66. Discharge of mortgage indebtedness.—Under the baseline tax system, all income would generally be taxed under the regular tax rate schedule. The baseline tax system would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, the Tax Code allowed an exclusion from a taxpayer’s taxable income for any discharge of indebtedness of up to \$2 million (\$1 million in the case of a married individual filing a separate return) from a qualified principal residence. The provision applied to debt discharged after January 1, 2007, and before January 1, 2014.

67. Discharge of business indebtedness.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, the Tax Code allows an exclusion from a taxpayer’s taxable income for any discharge of qualified real property business indebtedness by taxpayers other than a C corporation. If the canceled debt is not reported as current income, however, the basis of the underlying property must be reduced by the amount canceled.

68. Exceptions from imputed interest rules.—Under the baseline tax system, holders (issuers) of debt instruments are generally required to report interest earned (paid) in the period it accrues, not when received. In addition, the amount of interest accrued is determined by the actual price paid, not by the stated principal and interest stipulated in the instrument. But under current law, any debt associated with the sale of property worth less than \$250,000 is exempted from the general interest accounting rules. This general \$250,000 exception is not a tax expenditure under reference law but is under normal law. Current law also includes exceptions for certain property worth more than \$250,000. These are tax expenditure under reference law and normal law. These exceptions include, sales of personal residences worth more than \$250,000, and sales of farms and small businesses worth between \$250,000 and \$1 million.

69. Treatment of qualified dividends.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. For individuals in 2014, tax rates on regular income vary from 10 percent to 39.6 percent, depending on the taxpayer’s

income. In contrast, under current law, qualified dividends are taxed at a preferentially low rate that is no higher than 20 percent.

70. Capital gains (except agriculture, timber, iron ore, and coal).—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. For individuals in 2014, tax rates on regular income vary from 10 percent to 39.6 percent, depending on the taxpayer's income. In contrast, under current law, capital gains on assets held for more than one year are taxed at a preferentially low rate that is no higher than 20 percent.

71. Capital gains exclusion of small corporation stock.—The baseline tax system would not allow deductions and exemptions, or provide preferential treatment of certain sources of income or types of activities. In contrast, the Tax Code provided an exclusion of 50 percent, applied to ordinary rates with a maximum of a 28 percent tax rate, for capital gains from qualified small business stock held by individuals for more than 5 years; 75 percent for stock issued after February 17, 2009 and before September 28, 2010; and 100 percent for stock issued after September 27, 2010 and before January 1, 2014. A qualified small business is a corporation whose gross assets do not exceed \$50 million as of the date of issuance of the stock.

72. Step-up basis of capital gains at death.—Under the baseline tax system, unrealized capital gains would be taxed when assets are transferred at death. It would not allow for exempting gains upon transfer of the underlying assets to the heirs. In contrast, capital gains on assets held at the owner's death are not subject to capital gains tax under current law. The cost basis of the appreciated assets is adjusted to the market value at the owner's date of death which becomes the basis for the heirs.

73. Carryover basis of capital gains on gifts.—Under the baseline tax system, unrealized capital gains would be taxed when assets are transferred by gift. In contrast, when a gift of appreciated asset is made under current law, the donor's basis in the transferred property (the cost that was incurred when the transferred property was first acquired) carries over to the donee. The carryover of the donor's basis allows a continued deferral of unrealized capital gains.

74. Ordinary income treatment of loss from small business corporation stock sale.—The baseline tax system limits to \$3,000 the write-off of losses from capital assets, with carryover of the excess to future years. In contrast, the Tax Code allows up to \$100,000 in losses from the sale of small business corporate stock (capitalization less than \$1 million) to be treated as ordinary losses and fully deducted.

75. Accelerated depreciation of buildings other than rental housing.—Under an economic income tax, the costs of acquiring a building are capitalized and depreciated over time in accordance with the decline in the property's economic value due to wear and tear or obsolescence. This insures that the net income from the property is measured appropriately each year. Current law allows depreciation deductions that are accelerated relative to economic depreciation. However, the depreciation provisions of the Tax Code are part of the reference law rules, and thus do not give rise to tax expenditures under reference law. Under normal law, in contrast, depreciation allowances reflect estimates of economic depreciation.

76. Accelerated depreciation of machinery and equipment.—Under an economic income tax, the costs of acquiring machinery and equipment are capitalized and depreciated over time in accordance with the decline in the property's economic value due to wear and tear or obsolescence. This insures that the net income from the property is measured appropriately each year. Current law allows depreciation deductions that are accelerated relative to economic depreciation. However, the depreciation provisions of the Tax Code are part of the reference law rules, and thus do not give rise to tax expenditures under reference law. Under normal law, in contrast depreciation allowances reflect estimates of economic depreciation.

77. Expensing of certain small investments.—Under the reference law baseline, the costs of acquiring tangible property and computer software would be depreciated using the Tax Code's depreciation provisions. Under the

normal tax baseline, depreciation allowances are estimates of economic depreciation. However, the Tax Code allows qualifying investments by small businesses in tangible property and certain computer software to be expensed rather than depreciated over time.

78. Graduated corporation income tax rate.—Because the corporate rate schedule is part of reference tax law, it is not considered a tax expenditure under the reference method. A flat corporation income tax rate is taken as the baseline under the normal tax method; therefore the lower rate is considered a tax expenditure under this concept.

79. Exclusion of interest on small issue bonds.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, the Tax Code allows interest earned on small issue industrial development bonds (IDBs) issued by State and local governments to finance manufacturing facilities to be tax exempt. Depreciable property financed with small issue IDBs must be depreciated, however, using the straight-line method. The annual volume of small issue IDBs is subject to the unified volume cap discussed in the mortgage housing bond section above.

80. Deduction for U.S. production activities.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, the Tax Code allows for a deduction equal to a portion of taxable income attributable to domestic production.

81. Special rules for certain film and TV production.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow deductions and exemptions or preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, the Tax Code allowed taxpayers to deduct up to \$15 million per production (\$20 million in certain distressed areas) in non-capital expenditures incurred during the year. This provision expired at the end of 2013.

Transportation

82. Tonnage tax.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all profits and income under the regular tax rate schedule. U.S. shipping companies may choose to be subject to a tonnage tax based on gross shipping weight in lieu of an income tax, in which case profits would not be subject to tax under the regular tax rate schedule.

83. Deferral of tax on shipping companies.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all profits and income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, the Tax Code allows certain companies that operate U.S. flag vessels to defer income taxes on that portion of their income used for shipping purposes (e.g., primarily construction, modernization and major repairs to ships, and repayment of loans to finance these investments).

84. Exclusion of reimbursed employee parking expenses.—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, would be included in taxable income. Dedicated payments and in-kind benefits represent accretions to wealth that do not differ materially from cash wages. In contrast, the Tax Code allows an exclusion from taxable income for employee parking expenses that are paid for by the employer or that are received by the employee in lieu of wages. In 2014, the maximum amount of the parking exclusion is \$250 per month. The tax expenditure estimate does not include any subsidy provided through employer-owned parking facilities.

85. Exclusion for employer-provided transit passes.—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, would be included in taxable income. Dedicated payments and in-kind benefits represent accretions to wealth that do not differ materially from cash wages. In contrast, the Tax Code allows an exclusion from a taxpayer's taxable income for passes, tokens, fare cards, and vanpool expenses that are paid for by an employer or that are received by the employee in lieu of wages to defray an employee's commuting

costs. The maximum amount of the transit exclusion is \$130 (indexed) per month in 2014. (There had been a parity provision that had temporarily resulted in a higher maximum equal to those for parking passes for several years, but it expired on December 31, 2013).

86. Tax credit for certain expenditures for maintaining railroad tracks.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. However, the Tax Code allowed eligible taxpayers to claim a credit equal to the lesser of 50 percent of maintenance expenditures and the product of \$3,500 and the number of miles of track owned or leased. This provision expired at the end of 2013.

87. Exclusion of interest on bonds for Highway Projects and rail-truck transfer facilities.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, the Tax Code provides for \$15 billion of tax-exempt bond authority to finance qualified highway or surface freight transfer facilities. The authority to issue these bonds expires on December 31, 2015.

Community and Regional Development

88. Investment credit for rehabilitation of structures.—The baseline tax system would uniformly tax all returns to investments and not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. However, the Tax Code allows a 10-percent investment tax credit for the rehabilitation of buildings that are used for business or productive activities and that were erected before 1936 for other than residential purposes. The taxpayer's recoverable basis must be reduced by the amount of the credit.

89. Exclusion of interest for airport, dock, and similar bonds.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, the Tax Code allows interest earned on State and local bonds issued to finance high-speed rail facilities and Government-owned airports, docks, wharves, and sport and convention facilities to be tax-exempt. These bonds are not subject to a volume cap.

90. Exemption of certain mutual' and cooperatives' income.—Under the baseline tax system, corporations pay taxes on their profits under the regular tax rate schedule. In contrast, the Tax Code provides for the incomes of mutual and cooperative telephone and electric companies to be exempt from tax if at least 85 percent of their revenues are derived from patron service charges.

91. Empowerment zones.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income, tax credits, and write-offs faster than economic depreciation. In contrast, the Tax Code allowed qualifying businesses in designated economically depressed areas to receive tax benefits such as an employment credit, increased expensing of investment in equipment, special tax-exempt financing, and certain capital gains incentives. A taxpayer's ability to accrue new tax benefits for empowerment zones expired on December 31, 2013.

92. New markets tax credit.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. However, the Tax Code allowed taxpayers who made qualified equity investments in a community development entity (CDE), which then made qualified investments in low-income communities, to be eligible for a tax credit that is received over 7 years. The total equity investment available for the credit across all CDEs was \$3.5 billion for 2013, the last year for which credit allocations could be made.

93. Expensing of environmental remediation costs.—Under the baseline tax system, the costs would be amortized (or depreciated) over an estimate of the useful life of the building. This insures that the net income from the buildings is measured appropriately each year. However, the Tax Code allowed taxpayers who cleaned up certain hazardous substances at a qualified site to expense the clean-up costs, even though the expenses would generally

increase the value of the property significantly or appreciably prolong the life of the property. This provision expired on December 31, 2011.

94. **Credit to holders of Gulf and Midwest Tax Credit Bonds.**—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. Instead, under current law taxpayers that own Gulf and Midwest Tax Credit bonds receive a non-refundable tax credit rather than interest. The credit is included in gross income.

95. **Recovery Zone Bonds.**—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. In addition, it would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, the Tax Code allowed local governments to issue up to \$10 billion in taxable Recovery Zone Economic Development Bonds in 2009 and 2010 and receive a direct payment from Treasury equal to 45 percent of interest expenses. In addition, local governments could issue up to \$15 billion in tax exempt Recovery Zone Facility Bonds. These bonds financed certain kinds of business development in areas of economic distress.

96. **Tribal Economic Development Bonds.**—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, the Tax Code was modified in 2009 to allow Indian tribal governments to issue tax exempt “tribal economic development bonds.” There is a national bond limitation of \$2 billion on such bonds.

Education, Training, Employment, and Social Services

97. **Exclusion of scholarship and fellowship income.**—Scholarships and fellowships are excluded from taxable income to the extent they pay for tuition and course-related expenses of the grantee. Similarly, tuition reductions for employees of educational institutions and their families are not included in taxable income. From an economic point of view, scholarships and fellowships are either gifts not conditioned on the performance of services, or they are rebates of educational costs. Thus, under the baseline tax system of the reference law method, this exclusion is not a tax expenditure because this method does not include either gifts or price reductions in a taxpayer’s gross income. The exclusion, however, is considered a tax expenditure under the normal tax method, which includes gift-like transfers of Government funds in gross income (many scholarships are derived directly or indirectly from Government funding).

98. **HOPE tax credit.**—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. Under current law, however, the non-refundable HOPE tax credit allows a credit for 100 percent of an eligible student’s first \$1,200 of tuition and fees and 50 percent of the next \$1,200 of tuition and fees (2014 levels, indexed). The credit only covers tuition and fees paid during the first two years of a student’s post-secondary education. In 2014, the credit is phased out ratably for taxpayers with modified AGI between \$108,000 and \$128,000 if married filing jointly (\$54,000 and \$64,000 for other taxpayers), indexed.

99. **Lifetime Learning tax credit.**—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. Under current law, however, the non-refundable Lifetime Learning tax credit allows a credit for 20 percent of an eligible student’s tuition and fees, up to a maximum credit per return of \$2,000. In 2014, the credit is phased out ratably for taxpayers with modified AGI between \$108,000 and \$128,000 if married filing jointly (\$54,000 and \$64,000 for other taxpayers), indexed. The credit applies to both undergraduate and graduate students.

100. **American Opportunity Tax Credit.**—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. Under current law in 2014, however, the American Opportunity Tax Credit allows a partially refundable credit of up to \$2,500 per eligible student for qualified tuition and related expenses paid during each of the first four years of the student’s post-secondary education. The credit is phased out for taxpayers

with modified adjusted gross income between \$80,000 and \$90,000 (\$160,000 and \$180,000 for married taxpayers filing a joint return). The credit expires at the end of 2017.

101. Education Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA).—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. While contributions to an education IRA are not tax-deductible under current law, investment income earned by education IRAs is not taxed when earned, and investment income from an education IRA is tax-exempt when withdrawn to pay for a student's education expenses. The maximum contribution to an education IRA in 2014 is \$2,000 per beneficiary. In 2014, the maximum contribution is phased down ratably for taxpayers with modified AGI between \$190,000 and \$220,000 if married filing jointly (\$95,000 and \$110,000 for other taxpayers).

102. Deductibility of student-loan interest.—The baseline tax system accepts current law's general rule limiting taxpayers' ability to deduct non-business interest expenses. In contrast, taxpayers may claim an above-the-line deduction of up to \$2,500 on interest paid on an education loan. In 2014, the maximum deduction is phased down ratably for taxpayers with modified AGI between \$130,000 and \$160,000 if married filing jointly (\$65,000 and \$80,000 for other taxpayers).

103. Deduction for higher education expenses.—The baseline tax system would not allow a deduction for personal expenditures. In contrast, the Tax Code provided a maximum annual deduction of \$4,000 for qualified higher education expenses for taxpayers with adjusted gross income up to \$130,000 on a joint return (\$65,000 for other taxpayers). Taxpayers with adjusted gross income up to \$160,000 on a joint return (\$80,000 for other taxpayers) could deduct up to \$2,000. This provision expired on December 31, 2013.

104. Qualified tuition programs.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. Some States have adopted prepaid tuition plans, prepaid room and board plans, and college savings plans, which allow persons to pay in advance or save for college expenses for designated beneficiaries. Under current law, investment income, or the return on prepayments, is not taxed when earned, and is tax-exempt when withdrawn to pay for qualified expenses.

105. Exclusion of interest on student-loan bonds.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, interest earned on State and local bonds issued to finance student loans is tax-exempt under current law. The volume of all such private activity bonds that each State may issue annually is limited.

106. Exclusion of interest on bonds for private nonprofit educational facilities.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, under current law interest earned on State and local Government bonds issued to finance the construction of facilities used by private nonprofit educational institutions is not taxed.

107. Credit for holders of zone academy bonds.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. Under current law, however, financial institutions that own zone academy bonds receive a non-refundable tax credit rather than interest. The credit is included in gross income. Proceeds from zone academy bonds may only be used to renovate, but not construct, qualifying schools and for certain other school purposes. The total amount of zone academy bonds that may be issued was limited to \$1.4 billion in 2009 and 2010. As of March 2010, issuers of the unused authorization of such bonds could opt to receive direct payment with the yield becoming fully taxable. An additional \$0.4 billion of these bonds with a tax credit was authorized to be issued before January 1, 2014.

108. Exclusion of interest on savings bonds redeemed to finance educational expenses.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. Under current law, however, interest earned on U.S. savings bonds issued after December 31, 1989 is tax-exempt if the bonds are transferred to an educational institution to pay for educational expenses. The tax exemption is phased out for taxpayers with AGI between \$113,950 and \$143,950 if married filing jointly (\$76,000 and \$91,000 for other taxpayers) in 2014.

109. Parental personal exemption for students age 19 or over.—Under the baseline tax system, a personal exemption would be allowed for the taxpayer, as well as for the taxpayer's spouse and dependents who do not claim a personal exemption on their own tax returns. To be considered a dependent, a child would have to be under age 19. In contrast, the Tax Code allows taxpayers to claim personal exemptions for children aged 19 to 23, as long as the children are full-time students and reside with the taxpayer for over half the year (with exceptions for temporary absences from home, such as for school attendance).

110. Charitable contributions to educational institutions.—The baseline tax system would not allow a deduction for personal expenditures. In contrast, the Tax Code provides taxpayers a deduction for contributions to nonprofit educational institutions that are similar to personal expenditures. Moreover, taxpayers who donate capital assets to educational institutions can deduct the asset's current value without being taxed on any appreciation in value. An individual's total charitable contribution generally may not exceed 50 percent of adjusted gross income; a corporation's total charitable contributions generally may not exceed 10 percent of pre-tax income.

111. Exclusion of employer-provided educational assistance.—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income because they represent accretions to wealth that do not materially differ from cash wages. Under current law, however, employer-provided educational assistance is excluded from an employee's gross income, even though the employer's costs for this assistance are a deductible business expense. The maximum exclusion is \$5,250 per taxpayer.

112. Special deduction for teacher expenses.—The baseline tax system would not allow a deduction for personal expenditures. In contrast, the Tax Code allowed educators in both public and private elementary and secondary schools, who worked at least 900 hours during a school year as a teacher, instructor, counselor, principal or aide, to subtract up to \$250 of qualified expenses when determining their adjusted gross income (AGI). This provision expired on December 31, 2013.

113. Discharge of student loan indebtedness.—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income. In contrast, the Tax Code allows certain professionals who perform in underserved areas or specific fields, and as a consequence have their student loans discharged, not to recognize such discharge as income.

114. Qualified school construction bonds.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. Instead, it generally would seek to tax uniformly all returns from investment-like activities. In contrast, the Tax Code was modified in 2009 to provide a tax credit in lieu of interest to holders of qualified school construction bonds. The national volume limit is \$22.4 billion over 2009 and 2010. As of March 2010, issuers of such bonds could opt to receive direct payment with the yield becoming fully taxable.

115. Work opportunity tax credit (WOTC).—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. Instead, it generally would seek to tax uniformly all returns from investment-like activities. In contrast, the Tax Code provides employers with a tax credit for qualified wages paid to individuals. The credit applies to employees who began work on or before December 31, 2013 and who are certified as members of various targeted groups. The amount of the credit that can be claimed is 25 percent of qualified wages for employment less than 400 hours and 40 percent for employment of 400 hours or more. Generally, the maximum

credit per employee is \$2,400 and can only be claimed on the first year of wages an individual earns from an employer. However, the credit for long-term welfare recipients can be claimed on second year wages as well and has a \$9,000 maximum. Also, certain categories of veterans are eligible for a higher maximum credit of up to \$9,600. Employers must reduce their deduction for wages paid by the amount of the credit claimed.

116. Employer-provided child care exclusion.—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income. In contrast, under current law up to \$5,000 of employer-provided child care is excluded from an employee’s gross income even though the employer’s costs for the child care are a deductible business expense.

117. Employer-provided child care credit.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. In contrast, current law provides a credit equal to 25 percent of qualified expenses for employee child care and 10 percent of qualified expenses for child care resource and referral services. Employer deductions for such expenses are reduced by the amount of the credit. The maximum total credit is limited to \$150,000 per taxable year.

118. Assistance for adopted foster children.—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income. Taxpayers who adopt eligible children from the public foster care system can receive monthly payments for the children’s significant and varied needs and a reimbursement of up to \$2,000 for nonrecurring adoption expenses; special needs adoptions receive the maximum benefit even if that amount is not spent. These payments are excluded from gross income under current law.

119. Adoption credit and exclusion.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities. In contrast, taxpayers can receive a tax credit for qualified adoption expenses under current law. Taxpayers may also exclude qualified adoption expenses provided or reimbursed by an employer from income, subject to the same maximum amounts and phase-out as the credit. The same expenses cannot qualify for tax benefits under both programs; however, a taxpayer may use the benefits of the exclusion and the tax credit for different expenses.

120. Exclusion of employee meals and lodging.—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income. In contrast, under current law employer-provided meals and lodging are excluded from an employee’s gross income even though the employer’s costs for these items are a deductible business expense.

121. Child credit.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities or targeted at specific groups. Under current law, however, taxpayers with children under age 17 can qualify for a \$1,000 partially refundable per child credit. Any unclaimed credit due to insufficient tax liability may be refundable – taxpayers may claim a refund for 15 percent of earnings in excess of a \$3,000 floor, up to the amount of unused credit. Alternatively, taxpayers with three or more children may claim a refund of the amount of payroll taxes paid in excess of EITC received (up to the amount of unused credit) if this results in a larger refund. The credit is phased out for taxpayers at the rate of \$50 per \$1,000 of modified AGI above \$110,000 (\$75,000 for single or head of household filers and \$55,000 for married taxpayers filing separately). After 2017 refundability is based on earnings in excess of \$10,000 indexed from 2001, rather than from \$3,000 (unindexed); taxpayers with three or more children may continue to use the alternative calculation.

122. Credit for child and dependent care expenses.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities or targeted at specific groups. In contrast, the Tax Code provides parents who work or attend school and who have child and dependent care expenses a tax credit. Expenditures up to a maximum \$3,000 for one dependent and \$6,000 for two or more dependents are eligible for the credit. The credit is equal to 35 percent of

qualified expenditures for taxpayers with incomes of up to \$15,000. The credit is reduced to a minimum of 20 percent by one percentage point for each \$2,000 of income in excess of \$15,000.

123. Credit for disabled access expenditures.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. In contrast, the Tax Code provides small businesses (less than \$1 million in gross receipts or fewer than 31 full-time employees) a 50-percent credit for expenditures in excess of \$250 to remove access barriers for disabled persons. The credit is limited to \$5,000.

124. Deductibility of charitable contributions, other than education and health.—The baseline tax system would not allow a deduction for personal expenditures including charitable contributions. In contrast, the Tax Code provides taxpayers a deduction for contributions to charitable, religious, and certain other nonprofit organizations. Taxpayers who donate capital assets to charitable organizations can deduct the assets' current value without being taxed on any appreciation in value. An individual's total charitable contribution generally may not exceed 50 percent of adjusted gross income; a corporation's total charitable contributions generally may not exceed 10 percent of pre-tax income.

125. Exclusion of certain foster care payments.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. Foster parents provide a home and care for children who are wards of the State, under contract with the State. Under current law, compensation received for this service is excluded from the gross incomes of foster parents; the expenses they incur are nondeductible.

126. Exclusion of parsonage allowances.—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, would be included in taxable income. Dedicated payments and in-kind benefits represent accretions to wealth that do not differ materially from cash wages. In contrast, the Tax Code allows an exclusion from a clergyman's taxable income for the value of the clergyman's housing allowance or the rental value of the clergyman's parsonage.

127. Indian employment credit.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. Instead, it generally would seek to tax uniformly all returns from investment-like activities. In contrast, the Tax Code provided employers with a tax credit for qualified wages paid to employees who were enrolled members of Indian tribes. The amount of the credit that could be claimed was 20 percent of the excess of qualified wages and health insurance costs paid by the employer in the current tax year over the amount of such wages and costs paid by the employer in 1993. Qualified wages and health insurance costs with respect to any employee for the taxable year could not exceed \$20,000. Employees had to live on or near the reservation where he or she worked to be eligible for the credit. Employers had to reduce their deduction for wages paid by the amount of the credit claimed. The credit does not apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2013.

Health

128. Exclusion of employer contributions for medical insurance premiums and medical care.—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income. In contrast, under current law, employer-paid health insurance premiums and other medical expenses (including long-term care) are not included in employee gross income even though they are deducted as a business expense by the employee.

129. Self-employed medical insurance premiums.—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation and remuneration, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income. In contrast, under current law self-employed taxpayers may deduct their family health insurance premiums. Taxpayers without self-employment income are not eligible for this special deduction. The deduction is not available for any month in

which the self-employed individual is eligible to participate in an employer-subsidized health plan and the deduction may not exceed the self-employed individual's earned income from self-employment.

130. Medical Savings Accounts / Health Savings Accounts.—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income. Also, the baseline tax system would not allow a deduction for personal expenditures and generally would tax investment earnings. In contrast, individual contributions to Archer Medical Savings Accounts (Archer MSAs) and Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) are allowed as a deduction in determining adjusted gross income whether or not the individual itemizes deductions. Employer contributions to Archer MSAs and HSAs are excluded from income and employment taxes. Archer MSAs and HSAs require that the individual have coverage by a qualifying high deductible health plan. Earnings from the accounts are excluded from taxable income. Distributions from the accounts used for medical expenses are not taxable. The rules for HSAs are generally more flexible than for Archer MSAs and the deductible contribution amounts are greater (in 2014, \$3,300 for taxpayers with individual coverage and \$6,550 for taxpayers with family coverage). Thus, HSAs have largely replaced MSAs.

131. Deductibility of medical expenses.—The baseline tax system would not allow a deduction for personal expenditures. In contrast, under current law personal expenditures for medical care (including the costs of prescription drugs) exceeding 7.5 percent of the taxpayer's adjusted gross income are deductible. For tax years beginning after 2012, only medical expenditures exceeding 10 percent of the taxpayer's adjusted gross income are deductible. However, for the years 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016, if either the taxpayer or the taxpayer's spouse turns 65 before the end of the taxable year, the threshold remains at 7.5 percent of adjusted income. Beginning in 2017, the 10-percent threshold will apply to all taxpayers, including those over 65.

132. Exclusion of interest on hospital construction bonds.—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, under current law interest earned on State and local government debt issued to finance hospital construction is excluded from income subject to tax.

133. Refundable Premium Assistance Tax Credit.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities or targeted at specific groups. In contrast, for taxable years ending after 2013, the Tax Code provides a premium assistance credit to any eligible taxpayer for any qualified health insurance purchased through a Health Insurance Exchange. In general, an eligible taxpayer is a taxpayer with annual household income between 100% and 400% of the federal poverty level for a family of the taxpayer's size and that does not have access to affordable minimum essential health care coverage. The amount of the credit equals the lesser of (1) the actual premiums paid by the taxpayer for such coverage or (2) the difference between the cost of a statutorily-identified benchmark plan offered on the exchange and a required payment by the taxpayer that increases with income.

134. Credit for employee health insurance expenses of small business.—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities or targeted at specific groups. In contrast, the Tax Code provides a tax credit to qualified small employers that make a certain level of non-elective contributions towards the purchase of certain health insurance coverage for its employees. To receive a credit, an employer must have fewer than 25 full-time-equivalent employees whose average annual full-time-equivalent wages from the employer are less than \$50,000 (indexed for taxable years after 2013). However, to receive a full credit, an employer must have no more than 10 full-time employees, and the average wage paid to these employees must be no more than \$25,000 (indexed for taxable years after 2013). A qualifying employer may claim the credit for any taxable year beginning in 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 and for up to two years for insurance purchased through a Health Insurance Exchange thereafter. For taxable years beginning in 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013, the maximum credit is 35 percent of premiums paid by qualified taxable employers and 25 percent of premiums paid by qualified tax-exempt organizations. For taxable years beginning in 2014 and later years, the maximum tax credit increases to 50 percent of premiums paid by qualified taxable employers and 35 percent of premiums paid by qualified tax-exempt organizations.

135. **Deductibility of charitable contributions to health institutions.**—The baseline tax system would not allow a deduction for personal expenditures including charitable contributions. In contrast, the Tax Code provides individuals and corporations a deduction for contributions to nonprofit health institutions. Tax expenditures resulting from the deductibility of contributions to other charitable institutions are listed under the education, training, employment, and social services function.

136. **Tax credit for orphan drug research.**—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. In contrast, under current law drug firms can claim a tax credit of 50 percent of the costs for clinical testing required by the Food and Drug Administration for drugs that treat rare physical conditions or rare diseases.

137. **Special Blue Cross/Blue Shield deduction.**—The baseline tax system generally would tax all profits under the regular tax rate schedule using broadly applicable measures of baseline income. It would not allow preferentially low tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, Blue Cross and Blue Shield health insurance providers in existence on August 16, 1986 and certain other nonprofit health insurers are provided exceptions from otherwise applicable insurance company income tax accounting rules that substantially reduce their tax liabilities, provided that their percentage of total premium revenue expended on reimbursement for clinical services provided to enrollees is not less than 85 percent for the taxable year.

138. **Tax credit for health insurance purchased by certain displaced and retired individuals.**—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities, investments, or industries. In contrast, the Tax Code provided a refundable tax credit of 72.5 percent for the purchase of health insurance coverage by individuals eligible for Trade Adjustment Assistance and certain Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation pension recipients. This provision expired on December 31, 2013.

139. **Distributions from retirement plans for premiums for health and long-term care insurance.**—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated and deferred payments, should be included in taxable income. In contrast, the Tax Code provides for tax-free distributions of up to \$3,000 from governmental retirement plans for premiums for health and long term care premiums of public safety officers.

Income Security

140. **Exclusion of railroad retirement system benefits.**—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated and deferred payments, should be included in taxable income. In contrast, the Social Security Equivalent Benefit paid to railroad retirees is not generally subject to the income tax unless the recipient's gross income reaches a certain threshold under current law. See provision number 159, Social Security benefits for retired workers, for discussion of the threshold.

141. **Exclusion of workers' compensation benefits.**—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income. However, workers compensation is not subject to the income tax under current law.

142. **Exclusion of public assistance benefits.**—Under the reference law baseline tax system, gifts and transfers are not treated as income to the recipients. In contrast, the normal tax method considers cash transfers from the Government as part of the recipients' income, and thus, treats the exclusion for public assistance benefits under current law as a tax expenditure.

143. **Exclusion of special benefits for disabled coal miners.**—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income. However, disability payments to former coal miners out of the Black Lung Trust Fund, although income to the recipient, are not subject to the income tax.

144. **Exclusion of military disability pensions.**—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income. In contrast, most of the military disability pension income received by current disabled military retirees is excluded from their income subject to tax.

145. **Defined benefit employer plans.**—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including deferred and dedicated payments, should be included in taxable income. In addition, investment income would be taxed as earned. In contrast, under current law certain contributions to defined benefit pension plans are excluded from an employee's gross income even though employers can deduct their contributions. In addition, the tax on the investment income earned by defined benefit pension plans is deferred until the money is withdrawn.

146. **Defined contribution employer plans.**—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including deferred and dedicated payments, should be included in taxable income. In addition, investment income would be taxed as earned. In contrast, under current law individual taxpayers and employers can make tax-preferred contributions to employer-provided 401(k) and similar plans (e.g. 403(b) plans and the Federal Government's Thrift Savings Plan). In 2014, an employee could exclude up to \$17,500 (indexed) of wages from AGI under a qualified arrangement with an employer's 401(k) plan. Employees age 50 or over could exclude up to \$23,000 in contributions (indexed). The defined contribution plan limit, including both employee and employer contributions, is \$52,000 in 2014 (indexed). The tax on contributions made by both employees and employers and the investment income earned by these plans is deferred until withdrawn.

147. **Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs).**—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including deferred and dedicated payments, should be included in taxable income. In addition, investment income would be taxed as earned. In contrast, under current law individual taxpayers can take advantage of traditional and Roth IRAs to defer or otherwise reduce the tax on the return to their retirement savings. The IRA contribution limit is \$5,500 in 2014 (indexed); taxpayers age 50 or over are allowed to make additional "catch-up" contributions of \$1,000. Contributions to a traditional IRA are generally deductible but the deduction is phased out for workers with incomes above certain levels who, or whose spouses, are active participants in an employer-provided retirement plan. Contributions and account earnings are includible in income when withdrawn from traditional IRAs. Roth IRA contributions are not deductible, but earnings and withdrawals are exempt from taxation. Income limits also apply to Roth IRA contributions.

148. **Low and moderate-income savers' credit.**—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities or targeted at specific groups. In contrast, the Tax Code provides an additional incentive for lower-income taxpayers to save through a nonrefundable credit of up to 50 percent on IRA and other retirement contributions of up to \$2,000. This credit is in addition to any deduction or exclusion. The credit is completely phased out by \$60,000 for joint filers, \$45,000 for head of household filers, and \$30,000 for other filers in 2014.

149. **Self-Employed plans.**—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including deferred and dedicated payments, should be included in taxable income. In addition, investment income would be taxed as earned. In contrast, under current law self-employed individuals can make deductible contributions to their own retirement plans equal to 25 percent of their income, up to a maximum of \$52,000 in 2014. Total plan contributions are limited to 25 percent of a firm's total wages. The tax on the investment income earned by self-employed SEP, SIMPLE, and qualified plans is deferred until withdrawn.

150. **Premiums on group term life insurance.**—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including deferred and dedicated payments, should be included in taxable income. In contrast, under current law employer-provided life insurance benefits are excluded from an employee's gross income (to the extent that the employer's share of the total costs does not exceed the cost of \$50,000 of such insurance) even though the employer's costs for the insurance are a deductible business expense.

151. Premiums on accident and disability insurance.—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income. In contrast, under current law employer-provided accident and disability benefits are excluded from an employee's gross income even though the employer's costs for the benefits are a deductible business expense.

152. Income of trusts to finance supplementary unemployment benefits.—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income. In addition, investment income would be taxed as earned. Under current law, employers may establish trusts to pay supplemental unemployment benefits to employees separated from employment. Investment income earned by such trusts is exempt from taxation.

153. Special ESOP rules.—ESOPs are a special type of tax-exempt employee benefit plan. Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income. In addition, investment income would be taxed as earned. In contrast, employer-paid contributions (the value of stock issued to the ESOP) are deductible by the employer as part of employee compensation costs. They are not included in the employees' gross income for tax purposes, however, until they are paid out as benefits. In addition, the following special income tax provisions for ESOPs are intended to increase ownership of corporations by their employees: (1) annual employer contributions are subject to less restrictive limitations than other qualified retirement plans; (2) ESOPs may borrow to purchase employer stock, guaranteed by their agreement with the employer that the debt will be serviced by his payment (deductible by him) of a portion of wages (excludable by the employees) to service the loan; (3) employees who sell appreciated company stock to the ESOP may defer any taxes due until they withdraw benefits; (4) dividends paid to ESOP-held stock are deductible by the employer; and (5) earnings are not taxed as they accrue.

154. Additional deduction for the blind.—Under the baseline tax system, the standard deduction is allowed. An additional standard deduction for a targeted group within a given filing status would not be allowed. In contrast, the Tax Code allows taxpayers who are blind to claim an additional \$1,550 standard deduction if single, or \$1,200 if married in 2014.

155. Additional deduction for the elderly.—Under the baseline tax system, the standard deduction is allowed. An additional standard deduction for a targeted group within a given filing status would not be allowed. In contrast, the Tax Code allows taxpayers who are 65 years or older to claim an additional \$1,550 standard deduction if single, or \$1,200 if married in 2014.

156. Tax credit for the elderly and disabled.—Under the baseline tax system, a credit targeted at a specific group within a given filing status or for particular activities would not be allowed. In contrast, the Tax Code allows taxpayers who are 65 years of age or older, or who are permanently disabled, to claim a non-refundable tax credit equal to 15 percent of the sum of their earned and retirement income. The amount to which the 15-percent rate is applied is limited to no more than \$5,000 for single individuals or married couples filing a joint return where only one spouse is 65 years of age or older or disabled, and up to \$7,500 for joint returns where both spouses are 65 years of age or older or disabled. These limits are reduced by one-half of the taxpayer's adjusted gross income over \$7,500 for single individuals and \$10,000 for married couples filing a joint return.

157. Deductibility of casualty losses.—Under the baseline tax system, neither the purchase of property nor insurance premiums to protect the property's value are deductible as costs of earning income. Therefore, reimbursement for insured loss of such property is not included as a part of gross income, and uninsured losses are not deductible. In contrast, the Tax Code provides a deduction for uninsured casualty and theft losses of more than \$100 each, to the extent that total losses during the year exceed 10 percent of the 19

Taxpayer's adjusted gross income.

158. **Earned income tax credit (EITC).**—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities or targeted at specific groups. In contrast, the Tax Code provides an EITC to low-income workers at a maximum rate of 45 percent of income. For a family with one qualifying child, the credit is 34 percent of the first \$9,720 of earned income in 2014. The credit is 40 percent of the first \$13,650 of income for a family with two qualifying children, and it is 45 percent of the first \$13,650 of income for a family with three or more qualifying children. Low-income workers with no qualifying children are eligible for a 7.65-percent credit on the first \$6,480 of earned income. The credit is phased out at income levels and rates which depend upon how many qualifying children are eligible and marital status. In 2014, the phasedown for married filers begins at incomes \$5,430 greater than for otherwise similar unmarried filers. Earned income tax credits in excess of tax liabilities owed through the individual income tax system are refundable to individuals. After 2017, the additional benefit for families with three or more children will be eliminated and the marriage penalty relief will be reduced to \$3,000 (indexed from 2008).

Social Security

159. **Social Security benefits for retired workers.**—The baseline tax system would tax Social Security benefits to the extent that contributions to Social Security were not previously taxed. Thus, the portion of Social Security benefits that is attributable to employer contributions and earnings on employer and employee contributions (and not attributable to employee contributions) would be subject to tax. In contrast, the Tax Code may not tax all of the Social Security benefits that exceed the beneficiary's contributions from previously taxed income. Actuarially, previously taxed contributions generally do not exceed 15 percent of benefits, even for retirees receiving the highest levels of benefits. Up to 85 percent of recipients' Social Security and Railroad Social Security Equivalent retirement benefits are included in (phased into) the income tax base if the recipient's provisional income exceeds certain base amounts. (Provisional income is equal to other items included in adjusted gross income plus foreign or U.S. possession income, tax-exempt interest, and one half of Social Security and Railroad Social Security Equivalent retirement benefits.) The untaxed portion of the benefits received by taxpayers who are below the income amounts at which 85 percent of the benefits are taxable is counted as a tax expenditure. See also provision number 140, Railroad retirement benefits.

160. **Social Security benefits for disabled workers.**—Under the baseline tax system, insurance benefits would be taxed to the extent that premiums were paid out of pre-tax income. Under current law, however, benefit payments from the Social Security Trust Fund for disability are fully or partially excluded from a beneficiary's gross income in excess of any exclusion justified by contributions made from pre-tax income.

161. **Social Security benefits for spouses, dependents and survivors.**—Under the baseline tax system, Social Security benefits would be taxed to the extent they exceed contributions out of after-tax income. Under current law, however, benefit payments from the Social Security Trust Fund for spouses, dependents and survivors are fully or partially excluded from a beneficiary's gross income.

Veterans Benefits and Services

162. **Exclusion of veterans death benefits and disability compensation.**—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income because they represent accretions to wealth that do not materially differ from cash wages. In contrast, all compensation due to death or disability paid by the Veterans Administration is excluded from taxable income under current law.

163. **Exclusion of veterans pensions.**—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income because they represent accretions to wealth that do not materially differ from cash wages. Under current law, however, pension payments made by the Veterans Administration are excluded from gross income.

164. **Exclusion of GI bill benefits.**—Under the baseline tax system, all compensation, including dedicated payments and in-kind benefits, should be included in taxable income because they represent accretions to wealth that do not materially differ from cash wages. Under current law, however, G.I. Bill benefits paid by the Veterans Administration are excluded from gross income.

165. **Exclusion of interest on veterans housing bonds.**—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, under current law, interest earned on general obligation bonds issued by State and local governments to finance housing for veterans is excluded from taxable income.

General Government

166. **Exclusion of interest on public purpose State and local bonds.**—The baseline tax system generally would tax all income under the regular tax rate schedule. It would not allow preferentially low (or zero) tax rates to apply to certain types or sources of income. In contrast, under current law interest earned on State and local government bonds issued to finance public-purpose construction (e.g., schools, roads, sewers), equipment acquisition, and other public purposes is tax-exempt. Interest on bonds issued by Indian tribal governments for essential governmental purposes is also tax-exempt.

167. **Build America Bonds.**—The baseline tax system would not allow credits for particular activities or targeted at specific group. In contrast, the Tax Code in 2009 allowed State and local governments to issue taxable bonds through 2010 and receive a direct payment from Treasury equal to 35 percent of interest expenses. Alternatively, State and local governments could issue taxable bonds and the private lenders receive the 35-percent credit which is included in taxable income.

168. **Deductibility of nonbusiness State and local taxes other than on owner-occupied homes.**—Under the baseline tax system, a deduction for personal consumption expenditures would not be allowed. In contrast, the Tax Code allows taxpayers who itemize their deductions to claim a deduction for State and local income taxes (or, at the taxpayer's election, State and local sales taxes) and property taxes, even though these taxes primarily pay for services that, if purchased directly by taxpayers, would not be deductible. The ability for taxpayers to elect to deduct State and local sales taxes in lieu of State and local income taxes applied to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2003 and before January 1, 2014. (The estimates for this tax expenditure do not include the estimates for the deductibility of State and local property tax on owner-occupied homes. See item 59.)

Interest

169. **Deferral of interest on U.S. savings bonds.**—The baseline tax system would uniformly tax all returns to investments and not allow an exemption or deferral for particular activities, investments, or industries. In contrast, taxpayers may defer paying tax on interest earned on U.S. savings bonds until the bonds are redeemed.

<http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/tax-policy/Documents/Tax-Expenditures-FY2016.pdf>