



Serving Philadelphia's Investment & Rental Property Community

Message from the President:

Ask the Attorney Sessions



Greg Wertman,
Hapco President



Paul Cohen,
General Counsel

As President of Hapco Philadelphia, I'm incredibly proud of the services we provide to our members, and one of the most valuable resources available is our monthly "Ask the Attorney" sessions with

see "President's Message" on page 11

Pre-Tenant Property Protection Inspections

As property owners, one of the most critical tasks when renting out a home is ensuring both the property and the landlord are protected. A vital aspect of this is conducting a thorough pre-tenant inspection.

see "What's on Your Mind" on page 10

Federal Lead Paint Rules

The Biden Administration has issued its final version of a federal rule tightening the standards for exposure to lead paint dust. The Environmental Protection Agency now considers *any* amount of lead dust detected in a building to be dangerous.

see "Feds Tighten Rule on Lead Paint" on page 11

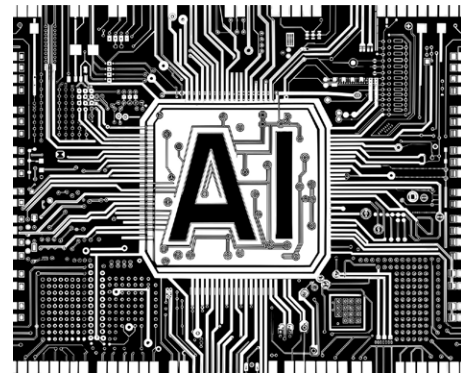
AI Hits the Rental Market

Artificial Intelligence Can Fill Vacancies and Boost Lease Conversions, but There are Anti-Trust Legal Questions

By HP Board of Directors Editorial Staff

We live in a world where everything is on demand — whether it's streaming a show, ordering groceries, or catching up on the latest news. Consumers expect instant access to information, and residential leasing is no different.

As a property owner or manager, you already know that maximizing occupancy is key to boosting your bottom line. But have you thought about how today's on-demand economy is transforming the way potential renters engage with prop-



erty listings? You may not be there yet, but AI technology is already in use, and so are the legal questions.

see "Rental AI" page 6



LANDLORD SPOTLIGHT

McDonald Ford

By Lauren Andreoli,
Hapco Philadelphia Marketing Director

This month, we spotlight McDonald Ford, a dedicated member of Hapco Philadelphia who has made a significant impact in the real estate field over the past two decades. With a passion for real estate to create generational wealth, McDonald has been deeply involved in the industry since purchasing his first property

see "McDonald Ford" on page 7



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2025 can look very different!

Handling Late Rent Payments

When Is the Right Time to Serve a Notice to Quit?

By Paul Cohen and Lauren Andreoli

Late rent payments are a challenge that most landlords will encounter at some point. Deciding when to serve a notice to quit after a tenant misses a payment requires careful consideration. Attorney Paul Cohen advises landlords on navigating the legal steps necessary when dealing with late payments. Here's how to handle late payments in a way that protects your interests while remaining fair.

The first thing you should do when a tenant misses their rent is check your lease. It's important to know what it says regarding the notice requirements for missed payments.

When it comes to rent payments, many leases waive the requirement for a formal notice to quit, meaning that landlords are not legally obligated to provide notice before starting the eviction process. Despite this, Cohen suggests that landlords send a notice anyway. This serves as a formal reminder to the tenant and creates a paper trail, which is important should the situation escalate to eviction. It also gives the tenant a clear chance to resolve the issue before legal action becomes necessary.

Cohen recommends a step-by-step process for handling late payments. On the 2nd day

of the month (assuming the rent is due on the 1st of the month), send a default notice to inform the tenant that the rent is past due. Even though the lease may provide for a grace period before a late charge is assessed, the rent is due on the 1st day of the month. If your lease provides for late fees, inform the tenant that they will be due if the rent is not paid by the date the lease says late fees will be charged. If the tenant still doesn't pay by the date the late fees are due (usually the 5th of the month), on the next day send a notice stating that the late fees have now been assessed against the tenant's account and that if the overdue rent is not paid by a specific date—often the 15th, 20th, or 25th—eviction proceedings will begin. The timeline may vary depending on the landlord's business philosophy and the lease terms, but the key is to be consistent.

If the rent is then not paid by the date specified, the next day send out the notice to quit and file for diversion.

At the end of the day, while landlords have legal rights to protect their investments, maintaining good tenant relationships is equally important. By communicating openly and following the proper steps, landlords can handle late payments in a way that balances fairness with enforcing the lease's terms.

Advertising Rates and Information about the Hapco Monthly Newsletter



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The deadline for each issue is the last day of each month.



Serving Philadelphia's Investment & Rental Property Community

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Kamala Harris Tax Plan Ideas: Details and Analysis



V.P. Kamala Harris. Courtesy of White House

William McBride, Erica York, Garrett Watson, Alex Muresianu
Courtesy of the Tax Foundation

TOPLINE PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES

10-Year Revenue (Billions) **+\$1,697**
Long-run GDP **-2.0%**
Long-Run Wages **-1.2%**
Long-Run FTE Jobs **-786,000**

Tax Foundation General Equilibrium Model, September 2024.

Latest Updates

- Updated to include the America Forward credits and new spending proposals.
- Originally published.

With less than one month left in the 2024 presidential campaign, Vice President Kamala Harris has provided updated details of her fiscal and economic agenda. On tax policy, Harris carries forward much of President Biden's FY 2025 budget, including higher taxes aimed at businesses and high earners. She would also further expand the child tax credit (CTC) and various other tax credits and incentives while exempting tips from income tax.

On a gross basis, we estimate that Vice President Harris's proposals would increase taxes by about \$4.1 trillion from 2025 to 2034. After taking various credits and tax cuts into account, Harris would raise about \$1.7 trillion over 10 years on a conventional

basis, and after factoring in reduced revenue from slower economic growth, the net revenue increase comes to \$642 billion. We estimate the proposed tax changes would reduce long-run GDP by 2.0 percent, the capital stock by 3.0 percent, wages by 1.2 percent, and employment by about 786,000 full-time equivalent jobs.

We find the tax policies would raise top tax rates on corporate and individual income to among the highest in the developed world, slowing economic growth and reducing competitiveness. The tax credits and other carveouts would complicate the tax code, run more spending through the IRS, and, together with various price controls, fail to improve affordability challenges in housing and other sectors.

Many tax policies remain unspecified, including how Harris might deal with next year's expiration of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA). Harris has not clearly indicated if or how her spending priorities align with the FY 2025 budget proposals. Depending on where she lands on these issues, the deficit impacts could be large.

In a possible scenario in which she extends the TCJA for all those earning under \$400,000 and adopts all the spending proposals specified in the FY 2025 budget and others announced on the campaign trail, we estimate the net effect of her policies would increase deficits by \$2.3 trillion over the next decade, measured on a conventional basis. Including the economic impacts of the tax increases, the net effect could increase deficits by roughly \$3.4 trillion over the next decade.

The wide range of possibilities reflects considerable uncertainty about her fiscal policy stance, leaving a large void regarding how she might deal with the already unprecendented, dangerous, and unsustainable federal debt trajectory.

Long-Run Economic Effects of Vice President Harris's Tax Proposals

Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	-2.0%
Gross National Product (GNP)	-1.8%
Capital Stock	-3.0%
Wage Rate	-1.2%
Full-Time Equivalent Jobs	-786,000

Source: Tax Foundation General Equilibrium Model, September 2024.

Detailed Harris Tax Proposals

Harris's tax plan relies on higher taxes on businesses and high earners to raise new revenues as outlined in President Biden's FY 2025 budget with some revisions (to capital gains taxes, as noted), combined with several tax credits. All provisions are modeled as starting in calendar year 2025 unless otherwise noted.

Major business provisions modeled:

- Increase the corporate income tax rate from 21 percent to 28 percent
- Increase the corporate alternative minimum tax introduced in the Inflation Reduction Act from 15 percent to 21 percent
- Quadruple the stock buyback tax implemented in the Inflation Reduction Act from 1 percent to 4 percent
- Make permanent the excess business loss limitation for pass-through businesses
- Further limit the deductibility of employee compensation under Section 162(m)
- Increase the global intangible low-taxed income (GILTI) tax rate from 10.5 percent to 21 percent, calculate the tax on a jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction basis, and revise related rules
- Repeal the reduced tax rate on foreign-derived intangible income (FDII)

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Donald Trump Tax Plan Ideas: Details and Analysis



Former President Donald Trump. Courtesy of website

Erica York, Garrett Watson, Alex Durante, Huaqun Li
Courtesy of the Tax Foundation

TOPLINE PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES

10-Year Revenue (Billions) **-\$3,013.2**
Long-run GDP **+0.8%**
Long-Run Wages **+0.8%**
Long-Run FTE Jobs **597,000**

Tax Foundation General Equilibrium Model, October 2024.

Latest Updates

- We corrected a data input error that affected the distributional results for 2025.
- Modeling updated to reflect recent proposals related to the 15% corporate rate for domestic production only, no SALT cap, exempting overtime from income tax, and creating an itemized deduction for auto loan interest.

- Notes added regarding recent proposals to uncap the state and local tax (SALT) deduction and exempting overtime pay from tax.

Former President Donald Trump has floated several tax policy ideas, including extending the expiring 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) changes, bringing back the deduction for state and local taxes (SALT), reducing the corporate tax rate for domestic production, exempting various types of income from the income tax, repealing green energy tax credits, and imposing steep new tariffs.

The impact of Trump's proposals will vary significantly depending on which combination of policies are pursued and how exactly each policy is structured.

Some of Trump's tax proposals are well-designed and would be efficient ways to promote long-run economic growth, such as permanent expensing for machinery, equipment, and research and development (R&D).

On the other hand, some of his tax proposals are poorly designed and would worsen the structure of the tax code while only creating a muted impact on long-run economic growth, such as the exemptions for tips and Social Security income.

Worse yet, Trump's reliance on import tariffs to offset the cost of tax cuts comes with major downsides. Tariffs are a particularly distortive way to raise revenue, especially as they invite foreign retaliation. We estimate Trump's proposed tariffs and partial retaliation

from all trading partners would together offset more than two-thirds of the long-run economic benefit of his proposed tax cuts.

A New Trade War Would Undermine the Growth of Tax Reform

Change in Long-Run GDP from Trump's Tax and Tariff Policies

Total GDP Impact of Tax Cuts	2.4%
Total GDP Impact of US Tariffs and Partial Foreign Retaliation	-1.7%

Totals may not sum due to rounding. Source: Tax Foundation General Equilibrium Model, October 2024.

As with any economic model, ours does not capture all the possible effects of the proposed tax and tariff policies, such as changes in compliance costs, the geopolitical implications of further trade wars, the impact of different tax burdens on different sectors and types of investments, or how uncertainty affects economic decision-making.

Our estimates illustrate that Trump's proposed tariffs threaten to offset much of the economic benefits of his proposed tax policy changes, and of those proposed tax policy changes, many move in the opposite direction of simple, pro-growth, and fiscally responsible tax reform.

Modeling the Major Provisions Proposed by Candidate Trump

Trump has suggested a wide variety of tax

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Rental AI

continued from page 1

Prospective tenants expect quick responses and seamless interactions, just like they do with any other service in their daily lives. To help you stay ahead, here are some considerations to harness artificial intelligence platforms such as ChatGPT, AppFolio, and Mezo in order to help streamline your lead-to-lease process and fill vacancies more efficiently. Property managers are now using AI to help with a variety of tasks including:

Virtual assistants: Provide 24/7 customer support, answer tenant questions, and manage common processes.

Chatbots: Provide real-time responses to tenant inquiries, reducing response time and improving satisfaction. Chatbots can also collect data on tenant preferences and pain points, which can be used to improve processes and customer support.

Data modeling: Help with decision-making for mortgage brokers, insurers, valuers, and other industry players.

Virtual staging: Redesign properties to show their full potential.

Artificial Intelligence platforms can assist property owners with the most labor-intensive tasks.

Respond Instantly to Inquiries

In today's fast-paced market, response time is critical. The quicker you engage with a prospect, the less likely you are to lose them to another property. And by quick, we don't mean hours — we're talking minutes. Studies show that landlords who respond within one or two minutes have up to a 40% better chance of connecting with a potential renter. On the flip side, waiting just 10 minutes could mean losing 20% of those prospects.

Qualify Leads Early

Once you've engaged a potential renter, the next step is making sure the property meets their needs. There's no point showing a unit to someone who plans to bring their pet to a no-pets building. That's where pre-qual-

ification comes in — saving you time and resources. By setting clear criteria from the outset and providing detailed listing information, you can help prospects understand if the property is right for them before they reach out.

Cross-Sell Your Properties

If a prospect isn't a fit for the property they initially inquire about, don't lose them — cross-sell! AI tools can automatically suggest alternative properties within your portfolio based on the prospect's needs.

Follow Up, Follow Up, Follow Up

Following up is critical, yet many property managers fall short in this area. Multiple follow-ups, whether through calls, emails, or texts, keep prospects engaged. And once again, AI can be a game-changer here — automating follow-ups based on a set schedule and using the prospect's preferred communication method to keep them in the loop.

Move the Leasing Process Online

If you're still relying on paperwork, printers, and fax machines for leasing, it's time to go digital. By adopting an online leasing platform, you can streamline the process and reduce vacancy times. Plus, AI can guide prospects through each step, from booking the showing to signing the lease, leaving your team free to focus on bigger tasks.

Top AI Powered Property Management Platforms

AppFolio

AppFolio has been an early adopter of AI in both the single and multifamily property management industries. Their newest release, Realm-X, is changing the leasing process with a suite of AI-powered tools to streamline your workflows.

SmartRent

SmartRent provides smart home technology for multifamily property managers. Their AI-driven communication tools can help your in-house team prioritize calls, decrease response times, and improve resident experience.

Show digs

Showdigs uses AI to power several of the

tools in a suite of leasing software. For example, the listing protection features technology to detect and remove fraudulent property listings on marketplace sites like Facebook and Craigslist, while verifying the credibility of prospective renters through facial and ID recognition and age-matching technology.

LeadScore AI

LeadScore AI from LeaseHawk transcribes inbound phone calls and reports on the purpose of the phone call. This technology can help property managers separate their calls by prospective renter, current tenant, or prospective client, without needing a member of your in-house team monitoring the phones.

Mezo

Mezo is another property management software focused on streamlining maintenance tasks while reducing costs. Mezo delivers AI-driven maintenance intelligence that automates workflows and improves outcomes at every stage of the service lifecycle.

Lawsuits Accuse Real Estate Software of Price-Fixing

Beware that with new technology come questions of legality. Following a nearly two-year investigation, the U.S. Justice Department and eight states' Attorneys General (Pennsylvania is not among them) filed an antitrust lawsuit in August against RealPage Inc, a commercial real estate software company. In this case, the government alleges that RealPage's software algorithms allow landlords to share sensitive proprietary pricing information and other data that stifles competition. "A large number of landlords effectively agree to outsource their pricing decisions to RealPage, ... which effectively permits RealPage to determine the price a renter will pay," Attorney General Merrick Garland said. RealPage denies the claims, saying their customers decide their own rent prices and the lawsuits have no merit.

We're still in the early stages of AI, so be cautious about how you utilize it.

The only certainty is that it's here to stay.

McDonald Ford

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in Philadelphia nearly 20 years ago. His interest in distressed properties and transformative renovations has led to a successful career as a landlord.

McDonald's introduction to Hapco Philadelphia dates back nearly a decade. Recognizing the organization's value, he joined as a member when he acquired his property. Today, he manages five single-family dwellings, emphasizing the importance of community and responsible property management. One of McDonald's most memorable experiences as a landlord involved helping a family who had previously faced challenges with their previous landlord. By providing them with a safe and secure home, he aimed to restore their confidence in the rental process, highlighting his commitment to positively impacting the lives of his tenants.

As a landlord, McDonald has faced various challenges, including managing tenants' issues that sometimes spill over into his responsibilities. He emphasizes transparency, clear communication, and thorough documentation to navigate these complexities. Being present and approachable, he fosters strong relationships with his tenants and actively participates in the community. McDonald has a detailed process for choosing tenants. He and his wife interview potential tenants and invite families to join the discussion. If the applicant has kids, those children must be present, so McDonald and his wife can observe how the parent interacts with



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Help us spread the word, **Hapco Philadelphia** is the oldest Philadelphia area association advocating for landlords. We are looking to expand our membership, and we hope that you will tell your other landlord friends how helpful **Hapco Philadelphia** has been for you and how important it is for them to join. **Hapco Philadelphia** is a first source for information about our industry. Check out our website at www.hapcophiladelphia.com



them. This method isn't flawless, but it can help lower risks. While no process is entirely secure, this approach makes it easier for them to evaluate potential tenants.

Being part of Hapco Philadelphia has provided McDonald with resources and expertise related to landlord-tenant laws and regulations. He appreciates the online self-help information, which helps him navigate the complexities of property management. For those just starting in real estate, McDonald advises having a solid plan and maintaining a business-like relationship with tenants. He emphasizes the importance of understanding landlord responsibilities and being fair to all tenants. Documentation and compliance are crucial to establishing legitimacy in the industry.

Regarding property maintenance, McDonald prioritizes timely responses to tenant requests. He works with a reliable team of licensed professionals to ensure that all repairs are handled quickly. He finds the most rewarding aspect of being a landlord is helping families transition to safe and comfortable homes, turning properties into places of belonging. Looking ahead, McDonald believes that the role of landlords in Philadelphia is evolving. As regulations and responsibilities increase, he sees a shift from individual landlords to larger corporations, which may impact community investment. He advocates for local landlords who are deeply connected to their neighborhoods

and more likely to prioritize the community and tenant well-being.

McDonald is aware of the misconceptions surrounding landlords, particularly the stereotype of "slumlords." He emphasizes that landlords, especially small business owners, depend on rental income to keep their businesses running. Understanding this dynamic can encourage tenants to take a more responsible approach to their rental relationships. One notable interaction with a tenant that stands out for McDonald involved a single mother struggling to afford rent. By working with her and adjusting the rent to a more manageable level, he cultivated a five-year relationship during which she consistently paid on time and maintained the property in excellent condition. This highlights his belief that understanding and empathy can foster positive landlord-tenant relationships.

Ultimately, McDonald aims to leverage his real estate investments to create generational wealth for his family. His vision includes funding his grandchildren's education and achieving a comfortable retirement. He sees his involvement with Hapco Philadelphia as a vital component in achieving these goals, benefiting from the knowledge and support offered by Hapco. In conclusion, McDonald Ford's journey in real estate shows his dedication, community involvement, and desire to help others. His commitment to his tenants and the broader Philadelphia community truly reflects the spirit of Hapco Philadelphia.

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Advertising relevant to investment in and operation of properties is accepted. The advertisements help defray the cost of producing and distributing the publication. They are also a valuable resource for members, who own and manage more than 30,000 small and mid-size rental buildings in Philadelphia, by helping them identify vendors who offer goods and services relevant to their business interests.

Hapco Philadelphia reserves the right to decline advertising inconsistent with rental property acquisition, sale, maintenance, and management.

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Harris Tax Plans

continued from page 4

- Major individual, capital gains, and estate tax provisions modeled:
- Expand the base of the net investment income tax (NIIT) to include nonpassive business income and increase the rates for the NIIT and the additional Medicare tax to reach 5 percent on income above \$400,000
- Increase top individual income tax rate to 39.6 percent on income above \$400,000 for single filers and \$450,000 for joint filers
- Tax long-term capital gains and qualified dividends at 28 percent (as opposed to 39.6 percent as in the Biden budget) for taxable income above \$1 million and tax unrealized capital gains at death above a \$5 million exemption (\$10 million for joint filers)

- Limit retirement account contributions for high-income taxpayers with large individual retirement account (IRA) balances
- Tighten rules related to the estate tax
- Tax carried interest as ordinary income for people earning more than \$400,000
- Limit 1031 like-kind exchanges to \$500,000 in gains
- Exempt tipped income from income taxation for occupations where tips are currently customary
- Expand the Section 195 deduction limit for startup expenses from \$5,000 to \$50,000.

Major tax credit provisions modeled:

- Revive and make permanent the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) child tax credit (CTC) and increase the CTC for newborns to \$6,000 in the first year of life
- Permanently extend the ARPA earned

income tax credit (EITC) expansion for workers without qualifying children

- Provide a \$25,000 tax credit for first-time homebuyers over four years

We also modeled various miscellaneous provisions for corporations, pass-through businesses, and individuals, including several energy-related tax hikes largely pertaining to fossil fuel production. While the Biden budget improperly characterized fossil fuel provisions as subsidies, many are deductions for costs (or approximations of costs) incurred.

Major provisions not modeled by us, but included in total fiscal impacts based on Biden administration estimates:

- Repeal the base erosion and anti-abuse tax (BEAT) and replace it with an under-taxed profits rule (UTPR) consistent with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)/G20 global minimum tax model rules

- Replace FDII with unspecified research and development (R&D) incentives

- Create a 25 percent “billionaire minimum tax” to tax unrealized capital gains of high-net-worth taxpayers

- Permanently extend the ARPA premium tax credits (PTCs) expansion (we do include PTCs in our distributional analysis)

- Create America Forward tax credits, which provide support for investment in specific industries subject to additional eligibility criteria

- Changes to tax compliance and administration

Long-Run Economic Effects of Vice President Harris’s Tax Proposals

We estimate the tax changes in Harris’s tax proposals would reduce long-run GDP by 2.0 percent, the capital stock by 3.0 percent, wages by 1.2 percent, and employment by about 786,000 full-time equivalent jobs. Harris’s tax proposals would decrease

American incomes (as measured by gross national product, or GNP) by 1.8 percent in the long run, reflecting offsetting effects of increased taxes and reduced deficits, as debt reduction reduces interest payments to foreign owners of the national debt.

Raising the corporate income tax rate to 28 percent is the largest driver of the negative effects, reducing long-run GDP by 0.6 percent, the capital stock by 1.1 percent, wages by 0.5 percent, and full-time equivalent jobs by 125,000.

Our economic estimates likely understate the effects of the Harris tax plan since they exclude two novel and highly uncertain yet large tax increases on high earners and multinational corporations, namely a new minimum tax on unrealized capital gains and a UTPR consistent with the OECD/G20 global minimum tax model rules. Nor do we include the proposed unspecified R&D incentives that would replace the lower tax rate on foreign-derived intangible income FDII.

Trump Tax Plans

continued from page 5

and tariff proposals and frequently proposes new ideas on the campaign trail. For this update of our details and analysis on Trump’s tax policies, we model the following major proposals, effective beginning January 1, 2025, unless otherwise stated:

- Making the individual TCJA expirations permanent except for the cap on SALT (effective January 1, 2026)
 - Rates and brackets
 - Standard deduction
 - Personal exemption
- Child tax credit and other dependent tax credit

- Limitations on itemized deductions (excluding SALT) and elimination of Pease limitation
- AMT changes
- Section 199A pass-through deduction and noncorporate loss limitation
- Making the TCJA estate tax changes permanent (effective January 1, 2026)
- Restoring the TCJA business tax provisions (effective January 1, 2026)
 - 100 percent bonus depreciation
 - R&D expensing
 - EBITDA-based interest limitation
- Reinstating the domestic production activities deduction (DPAD) at 28.5 percent to lower the effective corporate tax rate for domestic production to 15 percent

- Exempting tips from income taxes
- Exempting Social Security benefits from income taxes
- Exempting overtime pay from income taxes
- Creating an itemized deduction for auto loan interest
- Eliminating the green energy subsidies in the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)
- Raising current Section 301 tariffs on China to 60 percent
- Imposing a universal tariff on all US imports of 20 percent
- Foreign retaliation of 10 percent on all US exports plus additional in-kind tariffs on US exports to China

We exclude from our formal modeling an idea floated by vice presidential candidate Sen. JD Vance (R-OH) to increase the child tax credit to \$5,000—as the campaign has not confirmed support of the proposal—as well as Trump’s recent proposal to end double taxation of Americans abroad, though we include the potential cost of both policies in our range of potential budgetary estimates below.

Economic Effects of Trump’s Tax Proposals

Using the Tax Foundation’s General Equilibrium Model, we estimate Trump’s tax proposals would increase long-run GDP by 0.8 percent, the capital stock by 1.7 percent, wages by 0.8 percent, and employment by 597,000 full-time equivalent jobs.

We estimate the proposals would increase

the 10-year budget deficit by \$3 trillion conventionally and \$2.5 trillion dynamically. The debt-to-GDP ratio would increase from its long-run projected level of 201.2 percent to 223.1 percent on a conventional basis and 217 percent on a dynamic basis. Increased deficits and a higher debt load would require higher interest payments on the debt that would reduce American incomes as measured by GNP by almost 0.8 percent; the higher interest payments drive a wedge between the long-run effect on output of 0.8 percent and the long-run effect on GNP of -0.1 percent.

What's on Your Mind:

Jim Sims, Joe Thomas, and Robert Jackson's Guide to Pre-Tenant Inspections for Property Protection

By Lauren Andreoli,
Hapco Philadelphia Marketing Director

As property owners, one of the most critical tasks when renting out a home is ensuring both the property and the landlord are protected. A vital aspect of this is conducting a thorough pre-tenant inspection. While many landlords check off basic tasks like signing leases and collecting security deposits, they often overlook a crucial step: properly documenting the condition of the property before handing over the keys. Board member Jim Sims emphasizes the importance of conducting a detailed walk-through with the tenant. It's not just about handing over the keys; both parties need to be clear on the property's condition. Whether the walkthrough is performed by the landlord or their handyman, documenting any deficiencies is essential. Jim ensures that any issues, such as a malfunctioning door latch, are noted, and both the landlord and tenant sign off on these items. This process protects the landlord from liability and sets clear expectations for resolving any problems. By establishing a timeline for fixes, tenants can move in knowing that outstanding issues will be addressed promptly.

One of Jim's key tools is a camera. During the inspection, he takes detailed photos and videos of the entire property, inside and out, documenting everything from the sidewalk and stairs to the ceiling and checking for signs of leaks or damage. This visual documentation serves as evidence in case of disputes about the property's condition later on. Jim tests all outlets and checks ground fault receptacles, ensuring that all doors and windows function properly, including locks. He also records the flooring condition, paying attention to potential tripping hazards like loose tiles or worn carpets. Additionally, he checks the security and weight support of handrails, both inside and outside. Safety

is a top priority for Jim, and before the tenant moves in, he ensures that all smoke detectors, carbon monoxide alarms, and fire extinguishers are functioning correctly. This isn't just good practice; it's also a legal requirement in many areas. He also tests all appliances, including the stove, oven, and refrigerator, to ensure they are in good working condition, taking photos or videos to document this. Making sure the property is free of pests is essential, so it's important to have a handyman or licensed exterminator check for any signs of infestation and maintain records of treatments. This protects the landlord and helps prevent disputes with tenants down the line.

The exterior of the property is equally important. Jim makes sure that the yard is clear of trash and debris, and if there's a lawn, it's been cut. A well-kept yard not only enhances aesthetic appeal but also helps prevent accidents. He checks for safety issues in the basement, ensuring steps, handrails, and electrical panels are in working order without exposed wires. Additionally, Jim makes sure that the heater is functioning correctly and sets the hot water temperature to no higher than 120 degrees to avoid scalding risks. Building good relationships with neighbors is also important to him. Jim always introduces himself to the block captain, exchanges contact information, and provides

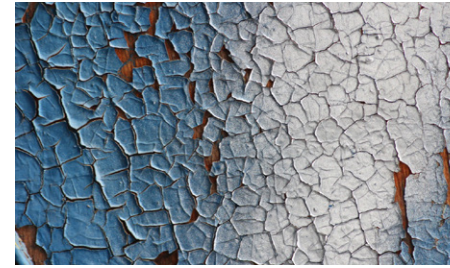
this information to tenants. This connection can be valuable in case of neighborhood issues or emergencies.

By conducting a detailed pre-tenancy inspection and thoroughly documenting everything, Jim not only protects the property but also prevents potential legal and financial troubles. These proactive measures help avoid disputes over damage, ensure tenant safety, and create a positive experience from the start. A little extra work upfront can save significant headaches in the long run. Board member Joe Thomas emphasizes the importance of taking pictures of each room and having tenants sign off on the condition of the property. "At the end of the lease, when they request their security deposit, the property should look the same as it did when they moved in, aside from normal wear and tear," he explains. He advises keeping a form with pictures showing the condition of each room, so tenants acknowledge how the property was when they moved in to the property. Board member Robert Jackson adds that the most crucial step is conducting a credit application. "If you don't do your homework upfront, you can end up with a problematic tenant," he warns. He advises pre-screening tenants and their families and ensuring they sign an inspection report to prevent future claims about unresolved issues. Checking references is equally vital to verify the tenant's history.



Feds Tighten Rule on Lead Paint

\$7 Million in Funding Coming to Philly This Year



By HP Board of Directors Editorial Staff

The Biden Administration has issued its final version of a federal rule tightening the standards for exposure to lead paint dust. Under the rule, the Environmental

Protection Agency (EPA) now considers *any* amount of lead dust detected in a building to be dangerous.

The agency says the rules would strengthen requirements for the removal of lead paint dust in pre-1978 housing and child care facilities and estimates that this would reduce the lead exposure of up to 1.2 million people every year.

Although the United States banned lead-based paint in homes in 1978, an estimated 31 million houses built before 1978 — including 70% of homes in Pennsylvania — still contain lead, and 3.8 million are

homes to children under the age of six, who are most at risk.

Lead can irreversibly harm brain development in children, lower IQ, cause behavioral problems, and lead to life-long health effects.

Earlier last month, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced more than \$420 million in grants to remove lead hazards from homes, including \$43 million across Pennsylvania and \$7 million earmarked for Philadelphia. Philadelphia is among several cities that require landlords to certify their properties as lead-safe or lead free.

President's Message

continued from page 1

Paul Cohen. This service is a game-changer for landlords and property managers, offering direct access to expert legal advice without the typical costs associated with hiring an attorney. Held via Zoom on different dates each month, these sessions allow you to get real-time answers to your real estate-related legal questions.

This service is crucial because it helps you avoid legal pitfalls and unnecessary expenses. As many of you know, navigating Philadelphia's complex rental regulations can be

challenging, and having an experienced attorney like Paul Cohen available to answer your questions gives you the confidence to manage your properties effectively. Whether you're dealing with tenant issues, property violations, or simply looking for clarity on a legal matter, this resource can save you both time and money.

What's even better is that this service is included in your annual Hapco membership fee of just \$165. For that price, you get access to expert legal advice that could otherwise cost hundreds of dollars. Even if you only own a few properties, being able to ask questions and get immediate feedback can prevent costly legal battles down the road.

If you haven't taken advantage of this service yet, I encourage you to do so. It's easy to register—just visit hapcophiladelphia.com, click on "Services," and select "Ask the Attorney." This benefit is exclusive to Hapco members, and it's one of the many ways we're committed to helping you succeed as a landlord.

At Hapco, we are always working to provide you with resources that make your membership worthwhile, and "Ask the Attorney" is one of the best examples of that. It's a service that can make a real difference in your ability to navigate the complexities of real estate management in Philadelphia, and I highly recommend taking full advantage of it.

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Over the Transom

Edited by Claudia Christian

Some recent traffic on Hapco's Online Forum:

Names have been withheld to protect the innocent. Responses reflect the views of the Forum respondents and not necessarily those of Hapco Philadelphia.

INEXPENSIVE HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE

Post: Have a tenant buying my property. Having trouble finding affordable home insurance. Any recommendations for her. Great tenant that has rented from me for 25 years. Any assistance is appreciated.

Response: Try Dan Compton, Compton insurance. If there's an option he'll find it. 215-248-2270; admin@hdcomptoninsurance.com

HEATING COMPANY UNIVERSITY CITY

Post: I am looking for a recommendation for a heating guy who works on boilers in University City area. Any suggestions?

Response: Comfy Heating & Cooling Jenn Byrne knows her stuff. Jennifer@comfyphilly.com

Response: I have been using Dr. HVAC FOR YEARS. In all my emergencies he was great, Gabriel Bey, (267) 456-9255

CEMENT CONTRACTOR

Post: Does anyone have a recommendation for a cement contractor to do a porch (tear up wooden porch, pour new cement porch) in West Philadelphia?

Response: Lisa Aglira lisa@markcement.com

EXTERNAL RAILING FOR PATIO/ ENTRANCE

Post: I am searching for a good supplier for a metal railing / fence for the entrance area of a standard Philly row home?

Response: Iron Guy Kostandin Tenegexhiu tjorina@yahoo.com, 267-348-7728

HANDYMAN/PLUMBER WANTED FOR JOBS IN WEST PHILLY

Post: Looking for a handyman/plumber for routine plumbing work for West Philly properties. My plumber retired and he gave his business to his longtime helper and a simple call went from \$65 to \$180. Can anyone make a referral?

Response: Justin Hicks (484) 995-6233. www.encoretotherescue.co

CLEANING PEOPLE

Post: Looking for recommendations on move in move out cleaning services!!

Response: I use Terence Jenkins and his cleaning staff for deep clean between tenants. I am very happy with his services. My tenants are also happy and comment favorably on the cleanliness. A cleaning service you can trust. Terence Jenkins, Sovereign Cleaning Services 215.740.6055 www.sovereigncleaningservices.biz

EPA NOW SAYS ONLY ZERO LEAD LEVELS ACCEPTABLE

Post: A new EPA rule lowers the acceptable amount of lead in dust testing to the lowest level that can be detected by a laboratory, in other words, it lowers it to zero. The rule may be confusing because it states specific amounts of lead that are acceptable on various surfaces, but the fact is that those levels are the lowest that laboratories can detect, so the bottom line is that if any lead at all is detected, property owners must remediate it. Government and industry sources estimate this could cost anywhere from \$5,000 to \$20,000 per home, and possibly much more if the lead-bearing surfaces actually have to be demolished to meet the standard. It's unclear what this actually means for landlords; whether just cleaning and retesting until no lead is found, or more radical structural interventions. See details on the EPA website.

Response: www.epa.gov

OPTION TO PURCHASE

Post: I sold a property to an investor as-is, due to a trouble tenant who refused to pay rent and allow access to the property for lead paint inspection. Now this tenant suing me for breach the "option to purchase" contract we signed years back. His lawyers reasoning that PA law permits the proceed of Option to Purchase even if the tenant is default in rent, although there's a 7 years clause that the lease is automatically terminated if the tenant doesn't pay rent. Has anyone heard about this kind of crazy concept where no pre-condition is required-once a landlord signs it then the landlord is legally bonded. Even if this particular tenant doesn't pay rent after the agreement is signed, the landlord still has to sell the property to this troubled tenant???

Response: You're probably OK if you can demonstrate tenant broke the terms of

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Over the Transom continued from page 12

his lease. But whatever you do: Hire a good contract lawyer now.

Response: What law is the lawyer referring to? We are interested in this because we think about option-to-buy-contracts as well.

Response: Unfortunately, this is the only eviction court case that I have ever lost was when there was an option to purchase with the lease agreement. The eviction court judge told me immediately that I was in the wrong court. The judge told me that I had to go to a different court due to the option agreement. Very frustrating. You will probably need to run this by an attorney.

Response: Why in the world would you sign a contract to purchase, years before you were going to sell ??

Response: Anyone has a copy please check it out for me for option to purchase. "No matter how bad a tenant is, once an option to purchase contract is signed, the landlord is bonded to this contract while the tenant doesn't have to..." isn't this an awful argument? You can make such great amount of money from your investment property, but you will lose all that income if you sign the wrong contract: Pennsylvania Landlord and Tenant Law and practice 5th Edition.

• what was done was done, please all HAPCO members help me as your fellow members. Thanks.

• If this is true, what is happening to me will be happening to anyone in this forum. This opens a loophole for those bad people who will scam people like us as investors. So, you are helping me as well as helping your fellow Hapco members and investors.

SIDEWALK SNOW REMOVAL SERVICE

Post: Does anyone have recommendations for sidewalk snow removal in the South Philly area?

Also, what is the going rate for interior row

home and corner property for sidewalk snow removal. Thank you in advance for any info and recommendations.

Response: Call Rich Miles -267-338-8830. I would call today as we are to have a bad winter.

HANDICAPPED LIFT RECOMMENDATION

Post: A friend of mine needs to have an outside lift installed. She is now unable to get up her outside stairs and get into her house. I am looking for recommendations for who can install one of those lifts that can do that. I would appreciate recommendations of people you have had experience with. Any other advice would also be appreciated also.

Response: South Jersey Elevator Company just gave me a bid to install an outdoor lift at our shore home. Great company, but I don't know if they work in Philly. Worth checking.

Response: I used Acorn stair lift for my parents' house a few years ago. They do interior and exterior lifts.

FRENCH DRAIN CONTRACTOR

Post: Does anyone have a recommendation for a contractor that can install a French drain in a finished basement, in a row home in west Philadelphia?

Response: Derek Price (Priceless Basements) 215-767-3167

Jameson Waterproofing 215-885-2424

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

Post: Quick question... Is there an L&L licensing requirement that we install Carbon Monoxide Detectors in our units?

Response: Don't know what the law states, but I would think that if you have electric heat and electric cooking, is there a threat of carbon monoxide in the property??

Response: Why risk it? Carbon monoxide detectors are inexpensive and the city requires them. Besides, carbon monoxide poisoning can come from a variety of places. For example, if there's an attached garage and someone leaves their car running, etc.

Response: The City of Philadelphia requires owners of all one- and two-family dwellings and small residential care/assisted living facilities (also known as board and care facilities) to install carbon monoxide (CO) detection and alarm devices (CO alarms) in their buildings. The Philadelphia Fire Code mandates installation of CO detection and CO alarms in their building.

Response: Yes, all-electric homes can have carbon monoxide (CO) because it can seep in from an attached garage or if a backup generator is used too close to living quarters during a power outage. CO is odorless and colorless, so you won't know if it's present unless you have detectors.

Even though electric appliances don't produce CO, common household appliances can be sources of CO if they are: Not properly maintained, Improperly ventilated, Malfunctioning, and Damaged or insufficient venting.

Some potential sources of CO include: Portable heaters, Gas or wood burning fireplaces, Gas kitchen range or cooktop, and Gas clothes dryer.

Building code requires one CO detector on every floor of the home, including the basement, and additional detectors within 10 feet of each bedroom and sleeping area. A carbon monoxide detector should also be installed around 15 to 20 feet from each gas-burning appliance.

Response: you make a valid point!

City of Philadelphia's Free Public Transportation Pilot Program Zero Fare – Showing Positive Results in its First Year

The City of Philadelphia's **Zero Fare** program today reports **positive impacts after completing its first year and is now moving into its second year.** Zero Fare is a two-year pilot program to determine the impact that access to free public transportation has on residents with lower incomes. The City is fully subsidizing fares through direct payment to SEPTA based on usage.

Zero Fare is one of the most expansive and low-barrier transit benefits access programs for transit riders with low incomes in the country based on mode coverage, subsidy level, number of participants, and pathways to enrollment.

In the first year, program transit cards – Zero Fare Key cards – were distributed to over 24,000 Philadelphians living in poverty and cover unlimited taps on all SEPTA lines and services (bus, subway, trolley, Regional Rail, and SEPTA Access) at no cost to the individual.

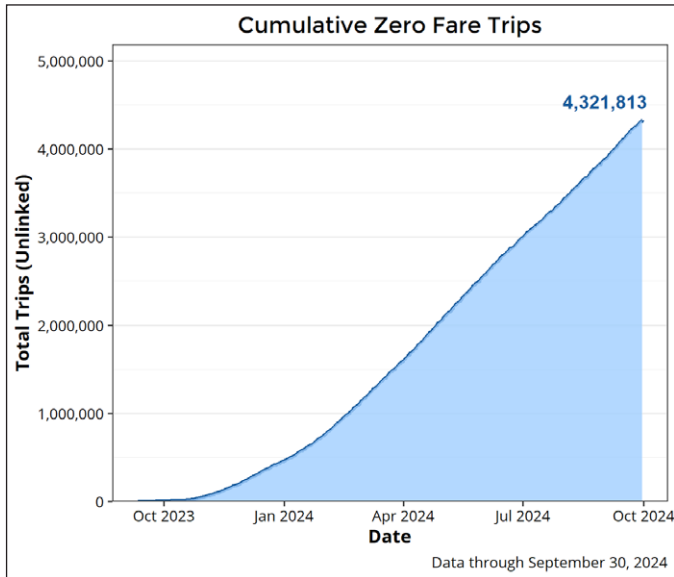
Residents cannot ask to be part of the pilot or directly sign up for the benefit; Zero Fare identifies a random sample of individuals

who are living at the lowest levels of poverty and enrolls participants automatically to eliminate barriers to accessing the benefit.

About 90 percentage of participants were randomly selected using City administrative data, and the remaining 10 percent of participants were enrolled through designated community-based organizations serving Philadelphia's

immigrant and refugee populations. The purpose of these approaches is to reach city residents with the greatest need and who would benefit from it the most. Approximately 64 percent of everyone enrolled are now participating.

“During the first year of the pilot program, we’ve seen improved quality of life for many residents using the benefit,” said **Nicola Mammes, Director of Zero Fare.** “Part-



icipants have shared with us that riding public transportation at no cost to them has provided significant cost savings and has improved access to medical appointments, childcare, and job opportunities. We will be able to provide more specific data about the impact following a formal evaluation thanks to grant funding the City received from the William Penn Foundation.”

According to the **2020 Community Needs Assessment managed through the City's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity**, transportation is the highest-ranking barrier to finding and sustaining employment for residents with low incomes in Philadelphia.

“Improving quality of life for all Philadelphia residents is a priority of this Administration, and we are laser-focused on those residents in lower-income households who can prosper with greater access to benefits available to them,” said **Cherelle L. Parker, Mayor of Philadelphia.** “We are trying to make it easier for people to have access to those benefits. Zero Fare is making it super easy for many people in this pilot program to take transit at no cost, and we know that participants will have new opportunities because of it.”

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LOCAL REAL ESTATE MEETING HAS THE POWER TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE

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Reasons to JOIN HAPCO Philadelphia

— hapco@hapcophiladelphia.com —

FEATURES & BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP:

Hapco Philadelphia is the pre-eminent rental real estate industry trade group in the Philadelphia region.

Hapco Philadelphia (HP) was established in 1954 to represent the collective interests and municipal concerns of owners of rental properties in the City of Philadelphia. Now with nearly 2,000 members, its owners/managers control over 20,000 low- and moderate- and market-rate rental units, including single-family and multi-family properties throughout the Philadelphia.

The Hapco Philadelphia board is an all-volunteer 401C-4, Not-For-Profit organization, comprised of entrepreneurs, teachers, police, lawyers, architects, and who helm firms ranging from start-ups to mom-and-pops, and old-line multi-generational firms.

HP advocates for an improved business environment, fair and reasonable laws, rules and regulations that protect the health and safety of tenants and at the same time enable landlords to operate in a free, fair, and open marketplace.

- NEW Fully Integrated Website
- Streamlined forms for landlord & tenant legal actions
- Searchable archive
- Continuous updates of legislative matters
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- Announcements & calendar events
- PA state level legislative activity & PROA
- Online store (coming soon!)
- Special "ask our lawyer" section
- Exclusive members-only online Forum
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- Online monthly newsletter, including news, trends, & editorials

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- Meet-and-Greets!

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Pilot Program

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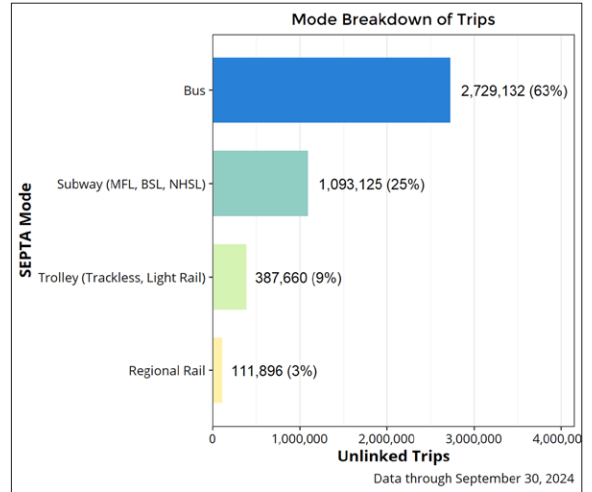
Zero Fare outreach to all selected program participants is ongoing as the City of Philadelphia continues implementing the pilot through June 30, 2025. Most program participants will be able to use the benefit for at least one year, if not longer, depending on age-eligibility and time of enrollment in the pilot program. As Zero Fare enters its second year, the City plans to distribute an additional 20,000 Zero Fare Key cards to eligible program participants – 19,000 will be mailed directly to residents enrolled automatically based on a lottery, and 1,000 will be distributed through the program’s nonprofit community partners. Program materials have been translated into at least 20 different languages.

The program has recorded over 4.3 million trips on SEPTA in the first year, with activity throughout the entire city and on all transit modes. Zero Fare transit activity continues

to increase as the program reaches full distribution and more enrolled participants use the benefit. Nearly 90 percent of Zero Fare transit trips are on the bus (63 percent) and subway (25 percent), with nine percent of trips on SEPTA trolleys and three percent on SEPTA Regional Rail lines. Data on SEPTA Access ADA Paratransit service travel activity is not available.

An analysis of enrolled participant data shows that more than half (52 percent) of selected program participants are women, and more than half (54 percent) of everyone enrolled identifies as Black, African American, or of African descent. Most enrolled participants are between the ages of 25 and 35 years old (28 percent), with nearly a quarter (24 percent) of participants between the ages of 35 and 45 years old.

“SEPTA is proud to aid the advancement of this program through its partnership with the



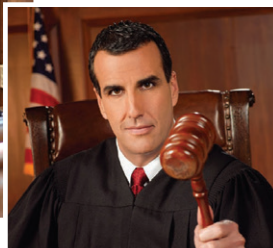
City of Philadelphia,” said **Leslie S. Richards, CEO and General Manager, SEPTA**. “This impactful initiative has broken down income barriers, making essential trips easier for thousands of residents. As the Zero Fare pilot enters its second year, we look forward to continued evaluation of its benefits that will support permanent expansion. We also encourage neighboring counties to explore similar equitable public transit access initiatives.”

Nobody Wants to Evict a Tenant

HapcoPhiladelphia and its members appreciate and value their tenants and the symbiotic relationship they share. Unfortunately, sometimes that relationship breaks down, with the necessity of court intervention in order to reclaim your property. Eviction is likely a last resort.



Everyone knows that going to court is time-consuming and expensive; HapcoPhiladelphia membership benefits include access to our one-stop solution to Philadelphia Municipal Court. Exclusive members-only fee structure provides top legal professionals who will guide and advise you on how the process works, from paperwork origination, mediation, settlement negotiation and, if



necessary, actual eviction and lock-change, so you are comfortable knowing your rights as a property owner are known and respected.

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- Petition Hearing\$150 if tenant should file a petition

To join HapcoPhiladelphia and for more information, or to register visit at HapcoPhiladelphia.com



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