

White House takes tax fight to Twitter

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US President Barack Obama speaks during a "Twitter Town Hall" in the East Room of the White House in Washington, DC, June 2011. The White House has taken its battle with Republican lawmakers over a crucial tax extension to Twitter, inviting Americans to weigh in on what the extra \$40 per paycheck means to them.

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US President [Barack Obama](#) has scolded Republicans for backing away from a deal to extend the payroll tax cut for an extra two months, warning that the political "brinksmanship" could imperil the already fragile US economy.

The Republicans have insisted they too are opposed to the tax hike, but want to hold fresh negotiations to strike a deal to extend the cut for the full year despite the fast-approaching holiday and end-of-year deadline.

In a new [tactic](#), the White House has called on middle class Americans to write in about how the payroll tax hike would affect them and published the responses on its website.

"Forty bucks a paycheck is HUGE for me. I am supporting my adult daughter and her four children," wrote K.J., from Sacramento, California, one of 18,000 responses the [White House](#) says it has received since Tuesday.

"By not passing the extended [payroll tax](#) cut they are literally taking food from my grandkids' mouths."

The full list of responses can be viewed at www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2011/1...re-what-40-means-you .

The responses have also poured into the micro-blogging website Twitter, where they are trending under "#40dollars."

Forty dollars "is half of my grocery budget for the week for my family," Will Jones posted on [Twitter](#).

"It means getting a new winter jacket for my toddler son (he lost his last week) & the rest for groceries," wrote Barb B.

Bitterly divided US lawmakers have traded blame for the failure to reach a deal to extend the tax cuts -- worth an average of \$1,000 a year for some 160 million Americans.

Obama and the Democrats have blamed the Republican-led House of Representatives for the crisis because it blocked a bipartisan Senate plan to extend the tax cut for another two months.

House [Republicans](#) have fired back that only a more lasting deal to

extend the tax cuts for a year will reassure the ailing US economy.

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