

MOTHER'S DAY SPECIALS

SUNDAY, MAY 12



MOTHER'S DAY PRIX FIXE \$80

Select Appetizer

Choice of Entrée:

½ Rack of Lamb or Petite Duo 4oz Filet & 8oz Lobster Tail

Select Dessert

Open Daily at 5PM

Reservations at [OpenTable.com](https://www.opentable.com)



MOTHER'S DAY MENU \$35

Select Appetizer

Choice of Entrée:

Chicken Cordon Bleu, 12oz Choice Prime Rib or Shrimp Scampi

Select Dessert

Open Daily at 5PM



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GREENLIGHT



America's biggest companies should pay their fair share

BY JEFF VONKAENEL / jeffv@newsreview.com

For the last 49 years, the Sacramento Metro Chamber of Commerce has sent a delegation of business leaders, elected officials and nonprofit and government staff to a four-day Washington, D.C., lobbyfest to explain to our legislators why federal dollars should come to California. This week, 325 leaders will lobby for housing, transportation, education and water dollars, and if money is not available, we will ask for lower federal taxes and fees.

I am writing this column on a plane heading to Washington to join my Sacramento colleagues, a trek which I have made repeatedly over the last decade. This decade has seen many changes in which party controls each of the three branches of government. And each year, I've seen a growing frustration about how things are done—or rather, not done in Washington.

Before we go to our nation's capital, Chamber members put in many hours producing comprehensive, detailed requests. These requests, even if not funded by the federal government, are great action plans. If the feds do not fund them, then the question naturally becomes, "Can we fund it ourselves?"

This funding issue is now one of our country's greatest moral questions. Who should pay for these programs that the vast majority of Americans believe are necessary?

Like an absent parent who sends an annual birthday card, but never pays a dime for child support, many large corporations reap the benefits of our infrastructure, yet pay no taxes. In a recent study, 60 Fortune 500 companies, including such highly profitable companies as Netflix and Amazon, will pay no federal income taxes in 2018, despite earning a total of \$79 billion in profits. To add insult to injury, these 60 companies actually received a combined \$4.3 billion in tax rebates.

Yet I expect these companies would agree with President Donald Trump and congressional Democrats that America needs a \$2 trillion plan to overhaul America's crumbling infrastructure. And of course these companies rely on graduates from our schools, drive fleets of cars and vans on our streets and have employees who enjoy breathing clean air, rely on Social Security in retirement and are happy that we have a military to defend our country. Like us, they want and need these infrastructure programs. But, unlike us, they have the money to pay lobbyists and to make political donations to ensure that they do not pay their fair share of taxes.

Because of the tax cuts for the wealthy during the Bush and Trump administrations, we are not only failing to fund needed services, but we are also dramatically increasing the federal deficit. We cut taxes for the rich, so we can borrow money from them and then pay it back with interest.

This insanity should end. It is absurd that most individuals have paid more federal taxes than Amazon. Our small company has paid more than Amazon. Our business could not have survived without schools, roads and government infrastructure. I should pay my fair share. But Amazon, Netflix and Chevron should pay their fair share as well.

We will not find Santa Claus in D.C. We may get funding for a few programs, but not all. For that we are going to have to look elsewhere. I suggest we look at the rich and corporate members of our community who have been successfully avoiding paying their fair share of our infrastructure expense.

Our future depends upon it. □

Jeff vonKaenel is the president, CEO and majority owner of the News & Review.