Here's How Billionaire John Arnold Spends Millions Opposing President Trump's Policy Agenda

Billionaire hedge fund manager John Arnold and his wife Laura have spent millions in recent years attempting to shape public policy to reflect their own personal world view. While John Arnold is trying to sell himself and his political influence as bipartisan, the evidence clearly demonstrates that his group, Arnold Ventures, is spending tens of millions to fight against the Trump agenda.

Here are some examples of how John Arnold is using his money to support organizations that directly oppose President Trump's biggest goals.

Opposing President Trump's Tax Cuts

Last year, President Trump's signature legislative achievement was passing the largest nominal tax cut in the history of America. The One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OB3) cut taxes by $4.5 trillion. The bill provides the average American household with a $2,100 tax cut in 2026 and a 20% tax deduction for American small businesses.

John Arnold has emerged as a key critic of President Trump's tax cuts and has leveraged his own personal wealth to fund groups in favor of increasing taxes for average American working families.

- Laura and John Arnold have called the One Big Beautiful Bill Act "catastrophic" and complained that the provisions they lobbied to be included "have been completely overshadowed by the catastrophic deficit." John Arnold believes that the bill was "crammed through" on an "artificial timeline" and enacted "for no good reason besides that it's politically popular and helps one get reelected."
- Arnold Ventures tax and fiscal policy fellow Scott Hodge argued that "[j]ustifying a massive, deficit-financed tax cut bill under the guise of stimulating the economy is the same rationale that Democrats used to pass the $1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act in 2021."
- The left-leaning Brookings Institute - which has received more than $5.7 million from the Laura and John Arnold Foundation since 2020 - warned Americans not to "expect much growth from the One Big, Beautiful Bill" and criticized the Council of Economic Advisors' analysis of OBBB, saying the "CEA's outlier results prompt skepticism."
- The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) has nicknamed the One Big Beautiful Bill Act the "harmful Republican Megabill" and essentially describes the tax cut bill as taking food from needy families to pay the wealthy. According to CBPP, "[t]he Republicans' harmful megabill … will raise costs for families and take away health coverage, food assistance, and other essentials from people who are already struggling to make ends meet — all while showering ever larger tax breaks on the wealthiest households." CBPP has received over $1.5 million from the Laura and John Arnold Foundation since 2020.

Opposing President Trump's Push for Lower Energy Costs

President Trump has been an advocate for American-made energy. On his first day in office, he signed the "Unleashing American Energy" Executive Order (EO) that changed government-wide federal policy to "to encourage energy exploration and production on Federal lands and waters."

President Trump's EO also required agencies to review "estimates of the social cost of greenhouse

gases, including the estimates for the social cost of carbon." The goal of this policy was to review the accuracy of President Biden's disastrous "Social Cost of Carbon" policy that allowed liberal bureaucrats to unilaterally shut down energy development.

In 2026, the White House and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the rescission of the 2009 carbon endangerment ruling from the EPA. This determination was used by the Obama and Biden Administrations to regulate emissions from American cars. According to the EPA, this rule cost U.S. taxpayers over $1 trillion in higher prices for automobile purchases.

All of these policies were enacted by President Trump in order to lower costs for Americans, create more domestic energy, and reduce dependence on foreign adversaries. All of these policies were opposed by Arnold-backed organizations who fought against their implementation.

- The liberal Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) openly opposed President Trump's energy EO because it would have stopped taxpayer support for Democrat green energy projects. CBPP encouraged Democrats to actively fight President Trump, stating that "[p]olicymakers should protect against any such cuts or unlawful impoundment of funds."
- The Arnold-supported Brookings Institute opposed President Trump's changes to Biden-era climate rules, writing that "this action is bad for the climate and for human welfare, removing a key federal tool for reducing GHG emissions and moving the United States toward a greener economy."
- The Center for American Progress (CAP) cajoled states to take up Biden climate policies in order to counteract "Trump administration and other policymakers who are openly hostile to climate policy." While CAP led the fight against President Trump's pro-energy policies, John Arnold funneled the group over $1.5 million since 2020.

Opposing President Trump's Action to Stop a Nuclear Iran

In late February, President Trump approved and launched Operation Epic Fury. The strikes against the terrorist regime in Iran were undertaken with clear military objectives: destroy Iranian offensive missile capability, dismantle Iran's navy and warfighting infrastructure, and, most importantly, stop Iran's ability to create and deploy a nuclear weapon.

President Trump carried out Operation Epic Fury in order to ensure that Americans are never harmed by an attack from Iran, especially an attack involving nuclear weapons. While this mission is a part of President Trump's oath to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States," he is facing criticism from political opponents in the U.S.

Among these critics are individuals and organizations that are bankrolled by John Arnold through his gifts to several think tanks and advocacy groups that oppose President Trump. Arnold has personally questioned President Trump's management of the war and funded its chief critics. While the President is working to protect the American people from attack, Arnold is focused on criticizing the President.

- John Arnold cast doubt over President Trump's actions in Iran, saying that he "[l]istened to roughly a dozen military and Middle East experts," and "[w]hile most could outline a near-term scenario where the US could make a clean exit, none had any confidence in that outcome." In comparing Iran to Venezuela, Arnold patly concluded that "[j]ust because it worked once doesn't mean it's always a good idea."
- Brookings Institute scholar Robery Kagan has been a leading critic of the President's efforts to prevent a nuclear Iran. Kagan penned a long piece in the left-leaning The Atlantic declaring that President Trump has lost the war.

- The Center for American Progress (CAP) has declared President Trump's confrontation of Iran over its nuclear capabilities "unconstitutional on multiple fronts." According to CAP, the war will be remembered in the U.S. as "a reckless war of choice that imposed enormous costs on Americans" and in the Middle East for "the loss of innocent life and what the war did to the land beneath their feet, the air they are forced to breathe, and the water they rely on to survive."

Opposing Immigration Enforcement and Border Security

President Trump has made protecting American citizens and securing our border a key priority since he first announced his intention to run for the White House in 2015. Border enforcement has been a cornerstone of the President's domestic and foreign policy agendas.

President Trump's border protection agenda has been an unprecedented success. The Administration just marked a full year with zero illegal entrants released across the border. The achievement is even more impressive when considering that illegal alien releases into the United States had reached all-time highs under President Biden. In April 2024 alone, there were 68,000 illegal entrants released into America by the U.S. government, according to Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Rodney S. Scott.

John Arnold has been funding opposition to President Trump's efforts to secure and protect our border. Through his donations to left-leaning organizations, Arnold Ventures has been paying for research designed to stop President Trump.

It is clear that John Arnold is openly opposed to the deportation of dangerous illegal aliens. Most concerning, however, is that Arnold funded the development of instructions on how to evade the law.

- The left-leaning Vera Institute of Justice - which has received $13.97 million from the Laura and John Arnold Foundation since 2020 - has put together a roadmap on "how to fight Trump's mass deportation agenda." Explaining that "government leaders don't have to sit idly by watching this cruelty unfold," Vera launched the Safety and Fairness for Everyone (SAFE) Network, a self-described "universal representation program" that helps "governments, immigration legal service providers, and advocates build public defender-style systems for immigrants facing detention and deportation."
- The Urban Institute put out "research" purporting to show that "immigration concerns disrupted families' essential activities and caused children emotional distress." The Urban Institute has received more than $34.1 million from the Laura and John Arnold Foundation since 2020.
- Arnold Ventures tax and fiscal policy fellow Scott Hodge criticized President Trump's enforcement actions by invoking former Chicago Mayor Richard Daley's infamous gaffe, saying that "ICE's behavior reminds me of the famous quote by Chicago Mayor Richard Daley, 'The police are not here to create disorder, they're here to preserve disorder.'"

Opposing President Trump's Trade Agenda

Unfair international trade practices have been destroying America's industrial base for years, as evidenced by our large trade deficit that had ballooned to $1.2 trillion in 2024. Changing the global trade status quo that made America beholden to foreign countries was a major component of President Trump's agenda.

A key part of how the President is changing international trade policy is by applying tariffs on certain countries to level the playing field and bringing them to the negotiating table. These policies are paying clear dividends for American workers and previously dying industries. Through the threat or implementation of duties on foreign goods, President Trump has leveraged $10.6 trillion in foreign investment from other countries.

John Arnold and the organizations he supports are spending their resources to work against the President's trade agenda. While President Trump is trying to help working American families, Arnold Ventures is funding think thanks pushing a narrative that claims that Trump policies hurt workers.

- The Urban Institute (UI) has argued that the tariffs implemented by President Trump are "economically destructive, creating uncertainty, raising prices, and reducing growth." Furthermore, UI has entertained the idea that not only will these tariffs hurt American workers, but that "democracy could suffer too" as "more support for antidemocratic sentiment, open[s] the door to reduced governmental checks and balances and doubt around election results."
- The Center for American Progress is openly advocating for the reversal of President Trump's tariffs, saying that "[r]emoving the Trump administration's tariffs would further lessen cost pressures for American families … contrary to the administration's claims that other countries bear the costs, the tariff burden has almost entirely fallen on American consumers and businesses."
- The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities claims that "the Trump Administration's sweeping tariffs have harmed the economy by increasing input costs and uncertainty for businesses and raising prices for consumers, placing a particularly heavy burden on people with low and moderate incomes." The group contends that OB3 and President Trump's tariffs "would leave the bottom 70% of households worse off."

Conclusion

While Arnold Ventures may pretend to be a bipartisan organization, the group's giving and statements made by its founder John Arnold clearly demonstrate its anti-Trump agenda. Whether it is Trump's tax cuts for working Americans, his fight to unleash domestic energy, securing the border, or removing nuclear weapons from Iran, John Arnold is funding the fight against the President's most important policies.

Based on research and findings presented here, John Arnold and his group Arnold Ventures rank among President Trump's most ardent and well-financed opponents. President Trump, lawmakers and White House officials would be wise to understand that Arnold Ventures is an enemy of the Trump policy agenda and treat them as such.