

**DESCRIPTION OF H.R. 1105,  
THE “DEATH TAX REPEAL ACT OF 2015”**

Scheduled for Markup  
by the  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
on March 25, 2015

Prepared by the Staff  
of the  
JOINT COMMITTEE ON TAXATION



March 24, 2015  
JCX-67-15

**CONTENTS**

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION .....	1
A. Repeal of the Estate and Generation-Skipping Transfer Taxes .....	2
B. Estimated Revenue Effects.....	13

## INTRODUCTION

The House Committee on Ways and Means has scheduled a committee markup of H.R. 1105, the “Death Tax Repeal Act of 2015,” on March 25, 2015. This document,<sup>1</sup> prepared by the staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation, provides a description of the bill.

---

<sup>1</sup> This document may be cited as follows: Joint Committee on Taxation, *Description of H.R. 1105, the “Death Tax Repeal Act of 2015”* (JCX-67-15), March 24, 2015. This document can also be found on the Joint Committee on Taxation website at [www.jct.gov](http://www.jct.gov).

## A. Repeal of the Estate and Generation-Skipping Transfer Taxes

### Present Law

#### In General

A gift tax is imposed on certain lifetime transfers, and an estate tax is imposed on certain transfers at death. A generation-skipping transfer tax generally is imposed on transfers, either directly or in trust or similar arrangement, to a “skip person” (*i.e.*, a beneficiary in a generation more than one generation younger than that of the transferor). Transfers subject to the generation-skipping transfer tax include direct skips, taxable terminations, and taxable distributions.

Income tax rules determine the recipient’s tax basis in property acquired from a decedent or by gift. Gifts and bequests generally are excluded from the recipient’s gross income.<sup>2</sup>

#### Common Features of the Estate, Gift and Generation-Skipping Transfer Taxes

##### Unified credit (exemption) and tax rates

*Unified credit.*—A unified credit is available with respect to taxable transfers by gift and at death.<sup>3</sup> The unified credit offsets tax, computed using the applicable estate and gift tax rates, on a specified amount of transfers, referred to as the applicable exclusion amount, or exemption amount. The exemption amount was set at \$5 million for 2011 and is indexed for inflation for later years.<sup>4</sup> For 2015, the inflation-indexed exemption amount is \$5.43 million.<sup>5</sup> Exemption used during life to offset taxable gifts reduces the amount of exemption that remains at death to offset the value of a decedent’s estate. An election is available under which exemption that is not used by a decedent may be used by the decedent’s surviving spouse (exemption portability).

*Common tax rate table.*—A common tax-rate table with a top marginal tax rate of 40 percent is used to compute gift tax and estate tax. The 40-percent rate applies to transfers in excess of \$1 million (to the extent not exempt). Because the exemption amount currently shields the first \$5.43 million in gifts and bequests from tax, transfers in excess of the exemption amount generally are subject to tax at the highest marginal 40-percent rate.

---

<sup>2</sup> Sec. 102.

<sup>3</sup> Sec. 2010.

<sup>4</sup> For 2011 and later years, the gift and estate taxes were reunified, meaning that the gift tax exemption amount was increased to equal the estate tax exemption amount.

<sup>5</sup> For 2015, the \$5.43 exemption amount results in a unified credit of \$2,117,800, after applying the applicable rates set forth in section 2001(c).

*Generation-skipping transfer tax exemption and rate.*—The generation-skipping transfer tax is a separate tax that can apply in addition to either the gift tax or the estate tax. The tax rate and exemption amount for generation-skipping transfer tax purposes, however, are set by reference to the estate tax rules. Generation-skipping transfer tax is imposed using a flat rate equal to the highest estate tax rate (40 percent). Tax is imposed on cumulative generation-skipping transfers in excess of the generation-skipping transfer tax exemption amount in effect for the year of the transfer. The generation-skipping transfer tax exemption for a given year is equal to the estate tax exemption amount in effect for that year (currently \$5.43 million).

*Transfers between spouses.*—A 100-percent marital deduction generally is permitted for the value of property transferred between spouses.<sup>6</sup> In addition, transfers of “qualified terminable interest property” also are eligible for the marital deduction. Qualified terminable interest property is property: (1) that passes from the decedent, (2) in which the surviving spouse has a “qualifying income interest for life,” and (3) to which an election under these rules applies. A qualifying income interest for life exists if: (1) the surviving spouse is entitled to all the income from the property (payable annually or at more frequent intervals) or has the right to use the property during the spouse’s life, and (2) no person has the power to appoint any part of the property to any person other than the surviving spouse.

A marital deduction generally is denied for property passing to a surviving spouse who is not a citizen of the United States. A marital deduction is permitted, however, for property passing to a qualified domestic trust of which the noncitizen surviving spouse is a beneficiary. A qualified domestic trust is a trust that has as its trustee at least one U.S. citizen or U.S. corporation. No corpus may be distributed from a qualified domestic trust unless the U.S. trustee has the right to withhold any estate tax imposed on the distribution.

Tax is imposed on (1) any distribution from a qualified domestic trust before the date of the death of the noncitizen surviving spouse and (2) the value of the property remaining in a qualified domestic trust on the date of death of the noncitizen surviving spouse. The tax is computed as an additional estate tax on the estate of the first spouse to die.

*Transfers to charity.*—Contributions to section 501(c)(3) charitable organizations and certain other organizations may be deducted from the value of a gift or from the value of the assets in an estate for Federal gift or estate tax purposes.<sup>7</sup> The effect of the deduction generally is to remove the full fair market value of assets transferred to charity from the gift or estate tax base; unlike the income tax charitable deduction, there are no percentage limits on the deductible amount. For estate tax purposes, the charitable deduction is limited to the value of the transferred property that is required to be included in the gross estate.<sup>8</sup> A charitable contribution

---

<sup>6</sup> Secs. 2056 and 2523.

<sup>7</sup> Secs. 2055 and 2522.

<sup>8</sup> Sec. 2055(d).

of a partial interest in property, such as a remainder or future interest, generally is not deductible for gift or estate tax purposes.<sup>9</sup>

## **The Estate Tax**

### Overview

The Code imposes a tax on the transfer of the taxable estate of a decedent who is a citizen or resident of the United States.<sup>10</sup> The taxable estate is determined by deducting from the value of the decedent's gross estate any deductions provided for in the Code. After applying tax rates to determine a tentative amount of estate tax, certain credits are subtracted to determine estate tax liability.<sup>11</sup>

Because the estate tax shares a common unified credit (exemption) and tax rate table with the gift tax, the exemption amounts and tax rates are described together above, along with certain other common features of these taxes.

### Gross estate

A decedent's gross estate includes, to the extent provided for in other sections of the Code, the date-of-death value of all of a decedent's property, real or personal, tangible or intangible, wherever situated.<sup>12</sup> In general, the value of property for this purpose is the fair market value of the property as of the date of the decedent's death, although an executor may elect to value certain property as of the date that is six months after the decedent's death (the alternate valuation date).<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Secs. 2055(e)(2) and 2522(c)(2).

<sup>10</sup> Sec. 2001(a).

<sup>11</sup> More mechanically, the taxable estate is combined with the value of adjusted taxable gifts made during the decedent's life (generally, post-1976 gifts), before applying tax rates to determine a tentative total amount of tax. The portion of the tentative tax attributable to lifetime gifts is then subtracted from the total tentative tax to determine the gross estate tax, *i.e.*, the amount of estate tax before considering available credits. Credits are then subtracted to determine the estate tax liability.

This method of computation was designed to ensure that a taxpayer only gets one run up through the rate brackets for all lifetime gifts and transfers at death, at a time when the thresholds for applying the higher marginal rates exceeded the exemption amount. However, the higher (\$5.43 million) present-law exemption amount effectively renders the lower rate brackets irrelevant, because the top marginal rate bracket applies to all transfers in excess of \$1 million. In other words, all transfers that are not exempt by reason of the \$5.43 million exemption amount are taxed at the highest marginal rate of 40 percent.

<sup>12</sup> Sec. 2031(a).

<sup>13</sup> Sec. 2032.

The gross estate includes not only property directly owned by the decedent, but also other property in which the decedent had a beneficial interest at the time of his or her death.<sup>14</sup> The gross estate also includes certain transfers made by the decedent prior to his or her death, including: (1) certain gifts made within three years prior to the decedent's death;<sup>15</sup> (2) certain transfers of property in which the decedent retained a life estate;<sup>16</sup> (3) certain transfers taking effect at death;<sup>17</sup> and (4) revocable transfers.<sup>18</sup> In addition, the gross estate also includes property with respect to which the decedent had, at the time of death, a general power of appointment (generally, the right to determine who will have beneficial ownership).<sup>19</sup> The value of a life insurance policy on the decedent's life is included in the gross estate if the proceeds are payable to the decedent's estate or the decedent had incidents of ownership with respect to the policy at the time of his or her death.<sup>20</sup>

#### Deductions from the gross estate

A decedent's taxable estate is determined by subtracting from the value of the gross estate any deductions provided for in the Code.

*Marital and charitable transfers.*—As described above, transfers to a surviving spouse or to charity generally are deductible for estate tax purposes. The effect of the marital and charitable deductions generally is to remove assets transferred to a surviving spouse or to charity from the estate tax base.

*State death taxes.*—An estate tax deduction is permitted for death taxes (*e.g.*, any estate, inheritance, legacy, or succession taxes) actually paid to any State or the District of Columbia, in respect of property included in the gross estate of the decedent.<sup>21</sup> Such State taxes must have been paid and claimed before the later of: (1) four years after the filing of the estate tax return; or (2) (a) 60 days after a decision of the U.S. Tax Court determining the estate tax liability becomes final, (b) the expiration of the period of extension to pay estate taxes over time under section 6166, or (c) the expiration of the period of limitations in which to file a claim for refund or 60 days after a decision of a court in which such refund suit has become final.

---

<sup>14</sup> Sec. 2033.

<sup>15</sup> Sec. 2035.

<sup>16</sup> Sec. 2036.

<sup>17</sup> Sec. 2037.

<sup>18</sup> Sec. 2038.

<sup>19</sup> Sec. 2041.

<sup>20</sup> Sec. 2042.

<sup>21</sup> Sec. 2058.

*Other deductions.*—A deduction is available for funeral expenses, estate administration expenses, and claims against the estate, including certain taxes.<sup>22</sup> A deduction also is available for uninsured casualty and theft losses incurred during the settlement of the estate.<sup>23</sup>

#### Credits against tax

After accounting for allowable deductions, a gross amount of estate tax is computed. Estate tax liability is then determined by subtracting allowable credits from the gross estate tax.

*Unified credit.*—The most significant credit allowed for estate tax purposes is the unified credit, which is discussed in greater detail above.<sup>24</sup> For 2015, the value of the unified credit is \$2,117,800, which has the effect of exempting \$5.43 million in transfers from tax. The unified credit available at death is reduced by the amount of unified credit used to offset gift tax on gifts made during the decedent's life.

*Other credits.*—Estate tax credits also are allowed for: (1) gift tax paid on certain pre-1977 gifts (before the estate and gift tax computations were integrated);<sup>25</sup> (2) estate tax paid on certain prior transfers (to limit the estate tax burden when estate tax is imposed on transfers of the same property in two estates by reason of deaths in rapid succession);<sup>26</sup> and (3) certain foreign death taxes paid (generally, where the property is situated in a foreign country but included in the decedent's U.S. gross estate).<sup>27</sup>

#### Provisions affecting small and family-owned businesses and farms

*Special-use valuation.*—An executor can elect to value for estate tax purposes certain “qualified real property” used in farming or another qualifying closely-held trade or business at its current-use value, rather than its fair market value.<sup>28</sup> The maximum reduction in value for such real property is \$750,000 (adjusted for inflation occurring after 1997; the inflation-adjusted amount for 2015 is \$1,100,000). In general, real property generally qualifies for special-use valuation only if (1) at least 50 percent of the adjusted value of the decedent's gross estate (including both real and personal property) consists of a farm or closely-held business property in the decedent's estate and (2) at least 25 percent of the adjusted value of the gross estate

---

<sup>22</sup> Sec. 2053.

<sup>23</sup> Sec. 2054.

<sup>24</sup> Sec. 2010.

<sup>25</sup> Sec. 2012.

<sup>26</sup> Sec. 2013.

<sup>27</sup> Sec. 2014. In certain cases, an election may be made to deduct foreign death taxes. See section 2053(d).

<sup>28</sup> Sec. 2032A.



consists of farm or closely held business real property. In addition, the property must be used in a qualified use (*e.g.*, farming) by the decedent or a member of the decedent's family for five of the eight years before the decedent's death.

If, after a special-use valuation election is made, the heir who acquired the real property ceases to use it in its qualified use within 10 years of the decedent's death, an additional estate tax is imposed to recapture the entire estate-tax benefit of the special-use valuation.<sup>29</sup>

*Installment payment of estate tax for closely held businesses.*—Under present law, the estate tax generally is due within nine months of a decedent's death. However, an executor generally may elect to pay estate tax attributable to an interest in a closely held business in two or more installments (but no more than 10).<sup>30</sup> An estate is eligible for payment of estate tax in installments if the value of the decedent's interest in a closely held business exceeds 35 percent of the decedent's adjusted gross estate (*i.e.*, the gross estate less certain deductions). If the election is made, the estate may defer payment of principal and pay only interest for the first five years, followed by up to 10 annual installments of principal and interest. This provision effectively extends the time for paying estate tax by 14 years from the original due date of the estate tax. A special two-percent interest rate applies to the amount of deferred estate tax attributable to the first \$1 million (adjusted annually for inflation occurring after 1998; the inflation-adjusted amount for 2015 is \$1,470,000) in taxable value of a closely held business. The interest rate applicable to the amount of estate tax attributable to the taxable value of the closely held business in excess of \$1 million (adjusted for inflation) is equal to 45 percent of the rate applicable to underpayments of tax under section 6621 of the Code (*i.e.*, 45 percent of the

---

<sup>29</sup> Prior to 2004, an estate also was permitted to deduct the adjusted value of a qualified family-owned business interest of the decedent, up to \$675,000. Sec. 2057. A qualified family-owned business interest generally was defined as any interest in a trade or business (regardless of the form in which it is held) with a principal place of business in the United States if the decedent's family owns at least 50 percent of the trade or business, two families own 70 percent, or three families own 90 percent, as long as the decedent's family owns at least 30 percent of the trade or business. To qualify for the exclusion, the decedent (or a member of the decedent's family) must have owned and materially participated in the trade or business for at least five of the eight years preceding the decedent's date of death. In addition, at least one qualified heir (or member of the qualified heir's family) was required to have materially participated in the trade or business for at least 10 years following the decedent's death. The qualified family-owned business rules provided a graduated recapture based on the number of years after the decedent's death within which a disqualifying event occurred.

The qualified family-owned business deduction and the unified credit effective exemption amount were coordinated. If the maximum deduction amount of \$675,000 is elected, then the unified credit effective exemption amount is \$625,000, for a total of \$1.3 million. If the qualified family-owned business deduction is less than \$675,000, then the unified credit effective exemption amount is equal to \$625,000, increased by the difference between \$675,000 and the amount of the qualified family-owned business deduction. However, the unified credit effective exemption amount cannot be increased above such amount in effect for the taxable year. Because of the coordination between the qualified family-owned business deduction and the unified credit effective exemption amount, the qualified family-owned business deduction did not provide a benefit in any year in which the applicable exclusion amount exceeded \$1.3 million.

<sup>30</sup> Sec. 6166.

Federal short-term rate plus three percentage points).<sup>31</sup> Interest paid on deferred estate taxes is not deductible for estate or income tax purposes.

## **The Gift Tax**

### Overview

The Code imposes a tax for each calendar year on the transfer of property by gift during such year by any individual, whether a resident or nonresident of the United States.<sup>32</sup> The amount of taxable gifts for a calendar year is determined by subtracting from the total amount of gifts made during the year: (1) the gift tax annual exclusion (described below); and (2) allowable deductions.

Gift tax for the current taxable year is determined by: (1) computing a tentative tax on the combined amount of all taxable gifts for the current and all prior calendar years using the common gift tax and estate tax rate table; (2) computing a tentative tax only on all prior-year gifts; (3) subtracting the tentative tax on prior-year gifts from the tentative tax computed for all years to arrive at the portion of the total tentative tax attributable to current-year gifts; and, finally, (4) subtracting the amount of unified credit not consumed by prior-year gifts.

Because the gift tax shares a common unified credit (exemption) and tax rate table with the estate tax, the exemption amounts and tax rates are described together above, along with certain other common features of these taxes.

### Transfers by gift

The gift tax applies to a transfer by gift regardless of whether: (1) the transfer is made outright or in trust; (2) the gift is direct or indirect; or (3) the property is real or personal, tangible or intangible.<sup>33</sup> For gift tax purposes, the value of a gift of property is the fair market value of the property at the time of the gift.<sup>34</sup> Where property is transferred for less than full consideration, the amount by which the value of the property exceeds the value of the consideration is considered a gift and is included in computing the total amount of a taxpayer's gifts for a calendar year.<sup>35</sup>

For a gift to occur, a donor generally must relinquish dominion and control over donated property. For example, if a taxpayer transfers assets to a trust established for the benefit of his or

---

<sup>31</sup> The interest rate on this portion adjusts with the Federal short-term rate.

<sup>32</sup> Sec. 2501(a).

<sup>33</sup> Sec. 2511(a).

<sup>34</sup> Sec. 2512(a).

<sup>35</sup> Sec. 2512(b).

her children, but retains the right to revoke the trust, the taxpayer may not have made a completed gift, because the taxpayer has retained dominion and control over the transferred assets. A completed gift made in trust, on the other hand, often is treated as a gift to the trust beneficiaries.

By reason of statute, certain transfers are not treated as transfers by gift for gift tax purposes. These include, for example, certain transfers for educational and medical purposes<sup>36</sup> and transfers to section 527 political organizations.<sup>37</sup>

### Taxable gifts

As stated above, the amount of a taxpayer's taxable gifts for the year is determined by subtracting from the total amount of the taxpayer's gifts for the year the gift tax annual exclusion and any available deductions.

*Gift tax annual exclusion.*--Under present law, donors of lifetime gifts are provided an annual exclusion of \$14,000 per donee in 2015 (indexed for inflation from the 1997 annual exclusion amount of \$10,000) for gifts of present interests in property during the taxable year.<sup>38</sup> If the non-donor spouse consents to split the gift with the donor spouse, then the annual exclusion is \$28,000 per donee in 2015. In general, unlimited transfers between spouses are permitted without imposition of a gift tax. Special rules apply to the contributions to a qualified tuition program ("529 Plan") including an election to treat a contribution that exceeds the annual exclusion as a contribution made ratably over a five-year period beginning with the year of the contribution.<sup>39</sup>

*Marital and charitable deductions.*--As described above, transfers to a surviving spouse or to charity generally are deductible for gift tax purposes. The effect of the marital and charitable deductions generally is to remove assets transferred to a surviving spouse or to charity from the gift tax base.

## **The Generation-Skipping Transfer Tax**

A generation-skipping transfer tax generally is imposed (in addition to the gift tax or the estate tax) on transfers, either directly or in trust or similar arrangement, to a "skip person" (*i.e.*, a beneficiary in a generation more than one generation below that of the transferor). Transfers subject to the generation-skipping transfer tax include direct skips, taxable terminations, and taxable distributions.

---

<sup>36</sup> Sec. 2503(e).

<sup>37</sup> Sec. 2501(a)(4).

<sup>38</sup> Sec. 2503(b).

<sup>39</sup> Sec. 529(c)(2).

### Exemption and tax rate

An exemption generally equal to the estate tax exemption amount (\$5.43 million for 2015) is provided for each person making generation-skipping transfers. The exemption may be allocated by a transferor (or his or her executor) to transferred property, and in some cases is automatically allocated. The allocation of generation-skipping transfer tax exemption effectively reduces the tax rate on a generation-skipping transfer.

The tax rate on generation-skipping transfers is a flat rate of tax equal to the maximum estate and gift tax rate (40 percent) multiplied by the “inclusion ratio.” The inclusion ratio with respect to any property transferred indicates the amount of “generation-skipping transfer tax exemption” allocated to a trust (or to property transferred in a direct skip) relative to the total value of property transferred.<sup>40</sup> If, for example, a taxpayer transfers \$5 million in property to a trust and allocates \$5 million of exemption to the transfer, the inclusion ratio is zero, and the applicable tax rate on any subsequent generation-skipping transfers from the trust is zero percent (40 percent multiplied by the inclusion ratio of zero). If, however, the taxpayer allocated only \$2.5 million of exemption to the transfer, the inclusion ratio is 0.5, and the applicable tax rate on any subsequent generation-skipping transfers from the trust is 20 percent (40 percent multiplied by the inclusion ratio of 0.5). If the taxpayer allocates no exemption to the transfer, the inclusion ratio is one, and the applicable tax rate on any subsequent generation-skipping transfers from the trust is 40 percent (40 percent multiplied by the inclusion ratio of one).

### Generation-skipping transfers

Generation-skipping transfer tax generally is imposed at the time of a generation-skipping transfer – a direct skip, a taxable termination, or a taxable distribution.

A direct skip is any transfer subject to estate or gift tax of an interest in property to a skip person. A skip person may be a natural person or certain trusts. All persons assigned to the second or more remote generation below the transferor are skip persons (*e.g.*, grandchildren and great-grandchildren). Trusts are skip persons if (1) all interests in the trust are held by skip persons, or (2) no person holds an interest in the trust and at no time after the transfer may a distribution (including distributions and terminations) be made to a non-skip person.

A taxable termination is a termination (by death, lapse of time, release of power, or otherwise) of an interest in property held in trust unless, immediately after such termination, a non-skip person has an interest in the property, or unless at no time after the termination may a distribution (including a distribution upon termination) be made from the trust to a skip person.

A taxable distribution is a distribution from a trust to a skip person (other than a taxable termination or direct skip). If a transferor allocates generation-skipping transfer tax exemption to a trust prior to the taxable distribution, generation-skipping transfer tax may be avoided.

---

<sup>40</sup> The inclusion ratio is one minus the applicable fraction. The applicable fraction is the amount of exemption allocated to a trust (or to a direct skip) divided by the value of assets transferred.

## **Income Tax Basis in Property Received**

### In general

Gain or loss, if any, on the disposition of property is measured by the taxpayer's amount realized (*i.e.*, gross proceeds received) on the disposition, less the taxpayer's basis in such property. Basis generally represents a taxpayer's investment in property with certain adjustments required after acquisition. For example, basis is increased by the cost of capital improvements made to the property and decreased by depreciation deductions taken with respect to the property.

A gift or bequest of appreciated (or loss) property is not an income tax realization event for the transferor. The Code provides special rules for determining a recipient's basis in assets received by lifetime gift or from a decedent.

### Basis in property received by lifetime gift

Under present law, property received from a donor of a lifetime gift generally takes a carryover basis. "Carryover basis" means that the basis in the hands of the donee is the same as it was in the hands of the donor. The basis of property transferred by lifetime gift also is increased, but not above fair market value, by any gift tax paid by the donor. The basis of a lifetime gift, however, generally cannot exceed the property's fair market value on the date of the gift. If a donor's basis in property is greater than the fair market value of the property on the date of the gift, then, for purposes of determining loss on a subsequent sale of the property, the donee's basis is the property's fair market value on the date of the gift.

### Basis in property acquired from a decedent

Property acquired from a decedent's estate generally takes a stepped-up basis. "Stepped-up basis" means that the basis of property acquired from a decedent's estate generally is the fair market value on the date of the decedent's death (or, if the alternate valuation date is elected, the earlier of six months after the decedent's death or the date the property is sold or distributed by the estate). Providing a fair market value basis eliminates the recognition of income on any appreciation of the property that occurred prior to the decedent's death and eliminates the tax benefit from any unrealized loss.

In community property states, a surviving spouse's one-half share of community property held by the decedent and the surviving spouse (under the community property laws of any State, U.S. possession, or foreign country) generally is treated as having passed from the decedent and, thus, is eligible for stepped-up basis. Thus, both the decedent's one-half share and the surviving spouse's one-half share are stepped up to fair market value. This rule applies if at least one-half of the whole of the community interest is includible in the decedent's gross estate.

Stepped-up basis treatment generally is denied to certain interests in foreign entities. Stock in a passive foreign investment company (including those for which a mark-to-market election has been made) generally takes a carryover basis, except that stock of a passive foreign investment company for which a decedent shareholder had made a qualified electing fund election is allowed a stepped-up basis. Stock owned by a decedent in a domestic international

sales corporation (or former domestic international sales corporation) takes a stepped-up basis reduced by the amount (if any) which would have been included in gross income under section 995(c) as a dividend if the decedent had lived and sold the stock at its fair market value on the estate tax valuation date (*i.e.*, generally the date of the decedent's death unless an alternate valuation date is elected).

### **Description of Proposal**

The proposal repeals the estate tax and the generation-skipping transfer tax for estates of decedents dying and generation-skipping transfers made after the date of enactment. The proposal includes a transition rule for assets placed in a qualified domestic trust by a decedent who died before the effective date of the proposal. Specifically, estate tax will not be imposed on: (1) distributions before the death of a surviving spouse from the trust more than 10 years after the date of enactment; or (2) assets remaining in the qualified domestic trust upon the death of the surviving spouse.

The proposal retains the gift tax with a top marginal gift tax rate of 35 percent. The lifetime gift tax exemption amount under the proposal is the same as the present-law amount, *i.e.*, \$5 million adjusted for inflation for years after 2011, and the gift tax annual exclusion (\$14,000 for 2015) will continue to apply. The proposal provides that a transfer in trust shall be treated as a taxable gift, unless the trust is treated as wholly owned by the donor or the donor's spouse for income tax purposes (*i.e.*, is a grantor trust).

The proposal does not change the rules for determining the income tax basis of assets acquired by gift or from a decedent. As a result, property received from a donor of a lifetime gift generally will continue to take a carryover basis, and property acquired from a decedent's estate generally will continue to take a stepped-up basis.

### **Effective Date**

The proposal is effective for decedents dying and gifts made after the date of enactment. The year of enactment shall be treated as two separate calendar years, one ending the day before the date of enactment and the other beginning on the date of enactment, for purposes of: (1) computing the gift tax under section 2502 and determining the unified credit for gift tax purposes under section 2505, and (2) determining any increase in basis under section 1015(d) of property acquired by gift.

## B. Estimated Revenue Effects

---

Fiscal Years												
[Millions of Dollars]												
<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2015-20</u>	<u>2015-25</u>
---	-14,616	-23,880	-25,157	-26,070	-27,059	-28,104	-29,323	-30,450	-31,529	-32,776	-116,782	-268,965

---

**NOTE:** Details do not add to totals due to rounding.