



## April 2020 Newsletter

*This is a monthly newsletter of updates from OpenRG Experts.  
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Don Boyd

*Don is Co-Director of the State and Local Government Finance Project at Rockefeller College, SUNY Albany, and a consultant, Open Source Policy Center.*

- Wrote a draft *Quantitative Note* on an OSPC-incubated project to create a synthetic microdata tax file that can be used with [Tax-Calculator](#) and [Tax-Brain](#).
  - Released a [report](#) on stochastic simulation modeling of the New York City Teachers' Retirement System, and was [interviewed by City Journal](#).
  - Consulted with several organizations about potential impacts on state and local government finances of Covid-19 and related public health responses.
  - Interviews with several media outlets on Covid-19-related impacts on government finances.
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Jason DeBacker

*Jason is an Associate Professor of economics at the University of South Carolina and a core maintainer of the open source models [Cost-of-Capital-Calculator](#) and [OG-USA](#), which model business taxes and macroeconomic effects of tax policy, respectively.*

- Presented on the [OG-USA Compute Studio app](#) in an AEI webinar on April 16 (video [here](#)).
- Released [OG-USA version 0.6.0](#).

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Richard Evans

*Richard is Advisory Board Visiting Fellow at the Baker Institute for Public Policy at Rice University, Associate Director and Senior Lecturer at the University of Chicago M.A. Program in Computational Social Science, Director of the Open Source Economics Laboratory, and President of OpenRG. He is also a core maintainer of [OG-USA](#), a macroeconomic model for fiscal policy analysis in the U.S.*

- Continued to work with the Tax Policy Center on macroeconomic modeling.

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Weifeng Zhong

*Weifeng is a Senior Research Fellow at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University. Weifeng is a core maintainer of the open-source [PCI-China](#) and [PCI-Crackdown](#) models.*

- Continued to brief US lawmakers and policymakers on the PCI projects;
- Published a paper, "Emergency Executive Powers: Not Needed Indefinitely," in the [Mercatus Policy Brief](#);
- Continued to develop a new project, the PCI-Outbreak, which aims at estimating the severity of China's COVID-19 outbreak based on how its official media covered the pandemic.