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June 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.

- Consulted to several organizations on the impact of Covid-19 and responses to the pandemic on state and local government finances.
- Continued work with Matt Jensen and the Open Source Policy Center on approaches to developing state weights for national microdata files.
- Prepared draft paper with colleagues Gang Chen and Yimeng Yin on the potential implications of public pension risk-sharing policies.
- Consulting work related to healthcare costs of retired public employees in San Francisco.

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.

- Published "An Analysis of Joe Biden's Tax Proposals" in *AEI Economic Perspectives* with Richard W. Evans and Kyle Pomerleau
- Work on modeling benefits and UBI in OG–USA, Tax-Brain, and Tax-Calculator.
- Added a new parameter class to Cost-of-Capital-Calculator for modeling asset specific depreciation rules.

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.

- Published ["An Analysis of Joe Biden's Tax Proposals"](#) in *AEI Economic Perspectives* with Jason DeBacker and Kyle Pomerleau

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Anderson Frailey
Anderson is an economics PhD student at the University of Virginia and a core maintainer of the open source [TaxData](#) and [Tax-Brain](#) projects.
- Finished porting all of the code used to create a tax unit dataset from publicly available CPS files that is suitable for use with Tax-Calculator from SAS to Python.

Jonathan Pycroft
Jon is an economic modeler and public finance economist based in Seville, Spain. He has experience building and working with computable general equilibrium models, overlapping generations models, and microsimulation models of tax and pension policies in Europe and Africa.

- Continued to work on a study of tax policy in Italy using the EDGE-M3 overlapping generations model, which focuses on the model's link to the EUROMOD microsimulation model.

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.

- Released the [2020 Q1 update](#) on the PCI-China project.
- Continued to [track](#) the latest Hong Kong protests and the possibility of a violent crackdown by China through the PCI-Crackdown project.

- Continued to develop the new PCI-Outbreak project, which aims at estimating the severity of COVID-19 in China based on how its official media covered the pandemic
- Recent paper with Julian Chan, "The 'Value' of Propaganda: Machine Predictions of Rare Events Based on Text Data," appeared as the lead article in the latest issue of the *Yale Journal of International Affairs*.