

# P O L I C Y | I M P A C T S

February 5, 2026

We are pleased to announce this year's recipients of our Early Career Scholars Grant:

## **The Impact of “No Tax on Tips”: Evidence from Linked Payroll and Point-of-Sale Records**

Dylan Balla-Elliott, University of Chicago

Isaac Norwich, University of Chicago

Balla-Elliott and Norwich analyze the effects of the “no tax on tips” policy, which was passed in the US in July 2025, on after-tax earnings and tipping behavior for food, beverage, and retail businesses. The authors use administrative payroll and point-of-sale records to measure tip earnings and to estimate behavioral changes in tipping practices from credit and debit card transactions. They will use these data to construct an MVPF estimate of this occupation-specific tax policy.

## **Environmental Cleanup Incentives as Place-Based Redistribution: Evidence from the EPA's Brownfields Program**

Aymeric Bellon, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Jason (Pang-Li) Chen, Auburn University

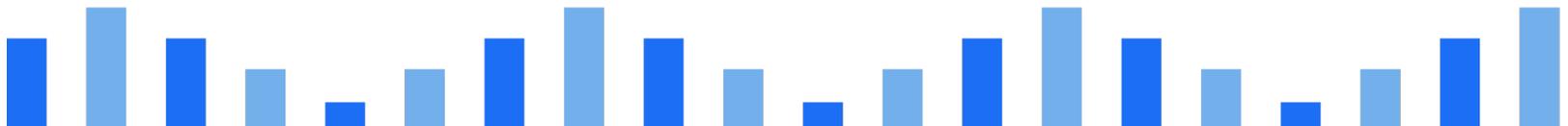
Cameron LaPoint, Yale University

Bellon, Chen, and LaPoint examine the economic impacts of the EPA's Brownfields Grants Program, which funds cleanup of contaminated industrial sites. Leveraging a novel merged dataset of business credit bureau records, real estate transactions, environmental liens, rental listings, and EPA records, the researchers will analyze the impacts of two recent expansions of the program on household wealth. The authors will calculate an MVPF of this program to facilitate comparison of the effectiveness of EPA incentives with other federal policies.

## **Universal Childcare Subsidies: Effects on Childcare Market and Labor Supply**

Justyna Klejdysz, LMU Munich and ifo Institute

Klejdysz studies the causal effects of a universal childcare voucher introduced in Poland in 2024 on prices, daycare expansion, and parental labor supply. Using administrative data on childcare providers, population registers, and social security records, the researcher employs a triple-difference design comparing mothers across birth cohorts before and after the reform. Klejdysz will evaluate the reform and analyze its welfare impacts using the MVPF framework.



## The Socioeconomic Consequences of Misdemeanor Conviction

Nikhil Rao, NBER

James Reeves, UC Denver

Rao and Reeves study the causal impacts of *not* being convicted for a misdemeanor offense on the socioeconomic outcomes of defendants and their families. Exploiting unanticipated budget cuts and prosecutorial reforms across twelve US counties and using linked administrative and survey data from the Federal Statistical Research Data Center, the researchers compare the outcomes of individuals whose cases were disposed just before versus after policy reforms. The authors will calculate an MVPF to shed light on the welfare impacts of misdemeanor prosecution policy.

