

Amazon highlights taxes paid in pushback against critics

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Amazon says it paid more than \$1 billion in US income taxes in 2019 as it highlighted its contributions to the US economy a day after reporting its results for the year

Amazon said Friday it paid more than \$1 billion in US federal income taxes in 2019 as it pushed back at criticism over its corporate

responsibility.

A blog post by Amazon sought to highlight its investments and contributions to the US economy, in a move to fend off critics claiming it benefits from taxpayer subsidies.

"Since 2010, we've made more than \$270 billion in investments in corporate offices, customer fulfillment and cloud infrastructure, wind and solar farms, eco-friendly equipment and machinery and compensation to our teams," Amazon said.

"These investments are accelerating, and we estimate that they have contributed an additional \$168 billion to the US GDP since 2010."

The tech giant, whose market valuation moved back above \$1 trillion following its earnings report Thursday, said it paid more than \$1 billion in US federal income taxes in 2019, along with \$2.4 billion in other federal taxes, including payroll taxes and customs duties.

It said it "collected and remitted nearly \$9 billion in sales and use taxes to states and localities throughout the US" last year and paid over \$1.6 billion in state and local taxes.

Amazon faced criticism over its prior annual reports which appeared to show it paid no federal income taxes in 2017 and 2018, and received some rebates after a tax reform measure passed by Congress—joining several other large corporations whose tax bill was cut by the law.

Amazon's statement Friday said it adheres to "all applicable federal and state tax laws," while noting that it takes advantage of laws that encourage economic investment and job creation.

"Over the last decade, no other US-based company has created more

jobs than Amazon," the statement said.

"Our investments have led to the creation of over two million jobs in the US."

It said its labor force—now 798,000 worldwide—includes some 500,000 in the United States, where it pays a wage of at least \$15 an hour, above the required minimums in most states.

Amazon's statement comes amid an effort by officials from 137 countries to reform the global tax system for a more equitable distribution of revenues paid by multinationals and the largely US-based digital giants.

In December, Amazon published its French tax returns, showing it paid 250 million euros last year, after accusations of underpayment.

Amazon's quarterly update showed a profit in the final three months of last year of \$3.3 billion on revenue of \$87.4 billion. For the full year it had net income of \$11.6 billion on \$280 billion in revenue.

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