

**COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515**

October 22, 2020

The Honorable Charles P. Rettig
Commissioner
Internal Revenue Service
1111 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20224

Dear Commissioner Rettig,

We are writing to determine the status of, and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) preparedness for, the upcoming 2021 tax return filing season. Clearly, the current filing season has been long and challenging for the IRS due to the ongoing pandemic, and we are concerned about another filing season fast approaching.

As you are aware, this filing season, the tax filing deadline for individual returns was extended to July 15, and the automatic tax filing extension of October 15 only just passed. Millions of taxpayers still have not had their tax returns processed, and we continue to hear from constituents who now believe their returns are “missing” and others who anxiously await needed refunds. With the current backlogs, it appears the processing of 2019 returns likely will extend into 2021.

As you know, the end of the calendar year is a time when the IRS typically develops forms and publications, prepares and tests its information systems for changes to the tax laws, and staffs and trains taxpayer assistance and other employees for the next filing season. In addition to the filing season workload, the IRS has added responsibilities this year related to the tax provisions in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act.

While we remain troubled by the backlogs and issues attendant to the current filing season overflowing into the next year, we also are worried that the next filing season will arrive without the normal IRS preparedness and the necessary pandemic contingency preparedness. We, therefore, ask for answers to the following questions by October 29, 2020:

1. Will the 2021 filing season begin on time next year?
2. On what date does the IRS expect to open the 2021 filing season?
3. Is the IRS prepared for the 2021 filing season?

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Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Richard E. Neal, *Chairman*
Committee on Ways and Means



Bill Pascrell, Jr., *Chairman*
Subcommittee on Oversight