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U.S. House of Representatives

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September 22, 2021

Chairman Richard Neal
Ways & Means Committee
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Bill Pascrell
Ways & Means Subcommittee on Oversight
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Neal and Chairman Pascrell,

We write to urge you to schedule an oversight hearing as soon as possible regarding the illegal breach of taxpayer privacy stemming from the confidential taxpayer information that was leaked to the media outlet, ProPublica, and subsequently made public.¹ The series of articles published by ProPublica on June 8, 2021, claim that this “vast trove” of tax data came from the Internal Revenue Services (IRS). ProPublica continues to publish articles containing this illegally obtained data and after three months we have received no indication from the IRS, the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, or the Department of Justice as to the source of the leaks. This is unacceptable.

The Ways and Means Committee, and the Oversight Subcommittee in particular, have long taken pride to protect taxpayer information under 26 U.S.C. § 6103. This work has been bipartisan. But in the last three months Committee Democrats have seemed largely uninterested in this issue, instead pursuing legislation to give approximately \$80 billion dollars to the IRS and to expand the agency’s authority to collect the private bank account information of nearly every American. How can any Member of Congress pursue such policies without knowing whether the IRS has identified and resolved the security lapse that led to this massive leak of taxpayer data?

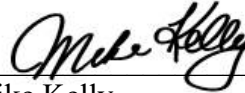
¹ <https://www.propublica.org/article/the-secret-irs-files-trove-of-never-before-seen-records-reveal-how-the-wealthiest-avoid-income-tax>.

Again, we urge you to schedule an oversight hearing on this matter immediately. We are not aware of any Committee activity scheduled for the rest of the year, so there should be no scheduling impediment. We need to work together to fulfill our duty to the American people to protect their private information and to help restore trust in the IRS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Kevin Brady", written over a horizontal line.

Kevin Brady
Republican Leader
Committee on Ways and Means

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Mike Kelly", written over a horizontal line.

Mike Kelly
Republican Leader
Subcommittee on Oversight
Committee on Ways and Means