

Carol Duval

My husband and I have been living in Australia and the UK for many years. I only became a US citizen in 2002 as I was so tired of going through all the green card application process. Now we both bitterly regret that decision.

We had no idea of the problems being a US citizen would entail.

I'm now retired and in my late 60s. All these years we've adhered to the Australian tax laws which include superannuation contributions, capital gains tax and property tax regulations.

Unlike the US, Australia and the UK do not allow any tax benefit on mortgages for a primary residence. If we'd been living in the US all these years, we would have benefitted from this generous allowance. However, to offset that, there is no capital gains tax payable when selling that primary residence. In Sydney the average home cost is well over the \$500K allowed capital gains tax free in the US, so if we sold our home we'd be liable to pay capital gains tax to the US government on a property that attracts no tax in Australia as we've never benefited from mortgage relief as we would have in the US. This is horribly unfair.

In addition, we'd be liable for capital gains tax that showed a alleged gain because of changes in exchange rates - even though our Australian dollars have never left Australia and we've never 'made' a penny from the currency fluctuations. Our Aussie dollars have always stayed in Australia.

We've paid into our superannuation accounts in Australia which attract a 15% tax when in accumulation mode which we've paid but when in pension (drawdown) mode, is tax free. I believe this is taxable in the US. Our entire retirement plan has been ruined because of this. We don't know how we'll manage and will most likely end up becoming dependent on the Australian Centrelink pension because of it. I can't imagine the Australian government is too pleased with this situation - self-funded retirees forced to

become state-dependent because of gouging by the IRS.

We've played by the Australian rules and have paid fairly into the Australian tax system. The US is forcing us to fill out cumbersome tax returns - even though we'd actually not be liable for any income tax - because of this citizen based taxation. WE have to pay thousands to a tax agent to prepare these cumbersome forms.

The FATCA reporting rules too have made us pariahs with many banks and financial institutions.

All I want now is to renounce my US citizenship which has become an insufferable burden. We're not wealthy people - I was a teacher and my husband was ex USAF and then in IT sales. We've worked hard and played by the rules all our life. We feel we've been very unfairly treated by the punitive US expat tax regime - and for what? Just money to tax agents and sleepless nights.

Sincerely
Carol Duval