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To Whom It May Concern:

I would urge you to revise current U.S. tax legislation mandating that American citizens pay income tax based on citizenship rather than residency. The system expects them to file taxes in two countries, to stay abreast of constantly changing tax laws, to pay outrageous accountant fees, and often, to pay money to two different governments.

I am one such American. I moved to Canada in 2007, when I received a job offer here (this was my first offer after finishing my Ph.D.). I have always filed taxes in both countries and have never tried to find loopholes. Every year, I have paid my accountant between 1400 and 2500 dollars in order to prepare my tax returns, even though I do not have very complicated taxes. This is simply what it costs, and my accountant is known to be cheap. Considering my starting salary was 60,000 CAD, this is a lot of money for me.

My local Canadian bank urged me to open a tax-free savings account a few years ago, so I did. My accountant told me that I would pay tax on any such account, including trusts, to the U.S. government, which demands that I pay tax on any foreign account. Therefore, there is no such thing as a “tax-free” account or trust for me. The Canadian government would tax a U.S. account, and the U.S. government would tax a Canadian account. In 2013, I had a child. I would love to set up an account for her—the “college savings fund” that so many Americans have for their children—but I cannot! It would be taxed by the U.S. It is impossible for me to save for my daughter’s education in this way. The government would take whatever money we made. Education is very important to me (I teach for a living), so this breaks my heart.

I do not reside in the U.S., I do not use any social services in the U.S., but I have to pay taxes to the U.S. This makes no sense to me and it makes me angry.

I know several Americans who have renounced their citizenship. I do not intend to renounce mine. I would like to spend time with my family in the U.S., to visit when I choose, and to have the possibility of moving there. I am proud to be American. So I will not renounce my citizenship, but will continue to lose a great deal of money and to resent the laws that force me to do so. I urge your committee to address this issue and to fight for change as soon as possible.

Sincerely,  
Magdalena Kay