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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

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

January 30, 2019

Dear Commissioner Rettig:

This letter concerns the Internal Revenue Service's plan to discontinue tax-transcript fax services and the impact of this change on tax practitioners and their clients. We write to express our interest in seeing that the temporary shutdown of certain government agencies, including the IRS, does not impede efforts the agency has made with the tax-practitioner community to ensure a smooth transition in particular methods of communicating taxpayer information to taxpayers and their agents. We appreciate that certain complexities exist with regard to the IRS' work at this time, and for that reason we encourage the IRS to extend any approaching deadlines for converting from one method of communicating such information to another. We also appreciate that concerns about security and identity theft are the primary reasons for this planned conversion, and we encourage the IRS make the necessary adjustments without compromising the security of taxpayer information.

Specifically, according to IR-2018-256, which was released on December 19, 2018, the IRS intends to discontinue its tax-transcript faxing service as of February 4, 2019, for both individual and business taxpayers. We understand the IRS has been working with the tax-practitioner community to alleviate its concerns that, absent alternative methods of providing tax practitioners with taxpayer information in a timely manner, the proposed changes would hamper its ability to effectively assist taxpayers. We also understand this work may have been suspended during the shutdown. Therefore, we encourage the IRS to delay its planned discontinuation of faxing taxpayer information until such time that the agency can reasonably resolve the legitimate concerns of the tax-practitioner community about alternatives to the IRS faxing taxpayer information. Of course, such a delay should not compromise the security or privacy of taxpayer information.

Should you have any questions, please contact John Schoenecker of the Chairman's staff and Adam Carasso of the Ranking Member's staff at 202-224-4515. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chuck Grassley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent "C" and "G".

Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Senate Committee on Finance

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ron Wyden". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent "R" and "W".

Ron Wyden
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Finance