Jason Latimer
[redacted]

Senate Working Groups on Individual Income and International Tax
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To Whom It May Concern:

As U.S. citizen and voter working abroad in multiple countries since 2007 I find the citizenship-based individual tax system a significant encumbrance on my time, wallet and peace of mind. The onerous burdens of the FATCA, double taxation and excessive FBAR reporting requirements are a regular complaint of Americans abroad. It feels as if we have to pay an annual fee just to hold on to our citizenship. Of all the countries in the world, only Eritrea and the United States tax non-residents, damaging the American reputation for freedom in foreign circles.

I have worked as an IT project manager abroad with decidedly middle-class earnings. I am not a high net worth individual playing the tax optimization game. My foreign accounts are a requirement of living and working abroad. However, the complexity and constant change in individual tax reporting requirements mean I spend $450 every year to engage an international tax consultancy. Filling out forms and providing supporting documentation is a full working days' worth of effort on my part – time I would rather spend with my family. I already pay high Austrian tax, which has a treaty with the United States. Why should I have to report it twice?

I strongly urge you to move for a change to residency-based taxation. I ask you to support a same-country exception on reporting of "foreign" bank accounts under FATCA. Simply changing the definition of a U.S. person for tax purposes in section 7701(a)(30) of the federal tax code so that a person meeting the bona fide residence test or physical presence test abroad is not considered a U.S. Person for federal income tax and reporting purposes would be a significant step in the right direction.

Americans abroad build business, political and cultural ties between the United States and the world. In many cases we are the only direct contact foreigners will ever have with America. Please stop treating us like potential criminals and start treating us like ambassadors of a great nation.

Sincerely,

Jason Latimer
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