



February 6, 2018

The Honorable Peter Roskam
United States House of Representatives
2246 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Roskam:

I write in support of H.R. 4916, the Preventing IRS Abuse and Protecting Free Speech Act. This important legislation prevents the IRS from targeting non-profits by prohibiting the agency from collecting the identity of donors who contribute to these organizations.

Under current law, the IRS requires non-profits to submit a Schedule B form, listing the names and addresses of their donors. While the agency collects this sensitive information, it does not use it for any purpose.

Instead, this form needlessly imposes compliance costs on both non-profits and the IRS, while also giving unelected bureaucrats a tool to chill political speech.

This concern is not hypothetical - there have been several cases where agency officials have leaked the sensitive information contained on Schedule B forms for political purposes. IRS officials have even publically doubted the need for Schedule B forms given that there is no need to collect this information, and the risk of this information becoming public.

There is a clear need to reform the IRS to better protect free speech. There have been well documented cases of the agency targeting political speech under the Obama Administration, most notably when IRS employee Lois Lerner led an effort to deny non-profit status to conservative organizations. Years after this scandal, it is unclear whether sufficient protections are in place.

For instance, a 2016 recent report by the Government Accountability Office warned that the IRS may still be unfairly targeting Americans based on political beliefs. As the report noted, serious internal control flaws mean the IRS may still be unfairly selecting Americans for an audit "based on an organization's religious, educational, political, or other views."

Protecting free speech is an issue that should be supported by members and groups regardless of political affiliation. Refusing to act against IRS abuse opens the door to future administrations doing the same regardless of whether they are Democrat or Republican.

The Preventing IRS Abuse and Protecting Free Speech Act should be a key part of the effort to reform the IRS and protect political free speech. All Members of Congress should support this important legislation.

Onward,

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