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CHAIRMAN NEAL CALLS ON IRS TO STOP SENDING TAX BILLS TO TAXPAYERS UNTIL THE AGENCY OPENS BACKLOGGED MAIL AND PAYMENTS

Aug 19, 2020 | Press Release

This summer, IRS had approximately 12 million pieces of unopened mail

SPRINGFIELD, MA—House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Richard E. Neal (D-MA) asked the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to temporarily halt sending notices for unpaid taxes to taxpayers who may have been affected by the mail backlog caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Reports indicate that many taxpayers receiving these notices have sent correspondence and payments to the IRS in the past few months, yet such mail remains unopened. Instead of sending potentially erroneous notices, Neal suggested the IRS establish an online portal for taxpayers to alert the IRS that they previously had mailed their tax payments. The Chairman also urged the IRS to ensure that taxpayers are not charged any penalties or interest for the IRS's delay in processing their payments.

"IRS officials reported that, due to office closures, the IRS has accumulated a staggering backlog of unopened mail," **explained Chairman Neal**. "At one point this summer, the IRS had approximately 12 million pieces of unopened correspondence in its inventory. Despite this unprocessed mail, the IRS reportedly has been sending notices to taxpayers whose correspondence and payments remain unopened. Therefore, many of the taxpayers receiving these notices already have made the payments that the IRS seeks."

"These notices impose unnecessary stress on taxpayers who, upon receipt, must contact the IRS for assistance," **Neal continued**. "This is particularly troubling at a time when the IRS is telling taxpayers who need to call the agency 'to expect long waits due to limited staffing.' Taxpayers reaching out for assistance on the telephone must hope someone can answer their call and that all payments they have made have been opened, processed, and indicated on their account. Certainly, any additional correspondence generated by these notices can

prove difficult for the IRS to handle and cause significant delays for taxpayers seeking fair resolution.”

“The IRS should not resume sending notices to taxpayers until the backlog has been reduced to pre-pandemic levels and taxpayer accounts have been updated,” **concluded Neal**. “At such time, the IRS should carefully review any notices before sending to ensure that they are correct and timely and that taxpayers are in no way being penalized for the delay... The IRS should not make its backlog problem a taxpayer problem.”

Read the entire letter [HERE](#)

(<https://waysandmeans.house.gov/sites/democrats.waysandmeans.house.gov/files/documents/2020.08.19%20Letter%20to%20IRS>

Subcommittees:

Oversight (116th Congress)

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