

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

January 24, 2022

Erin Collins
National Taxpayer Advocate
1111 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20224

Dear Ms. Collins:

We write today on behalf of our constituents to address concerning news from the Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS).

In a November communication from the Local Taxpayer Advocate (LTA) on behalf of TAS, your office noted that processing time for amended returns is “considerably longer than 20 weeks.” We have also learned your organization has declined to continue individual case advocacy on behalf of constituents with delayed amended returns. This delay in processing amended returns coupled with your denial of advocacy on behalf of taxpayers creates an undue burden on our constituents.

This development is especially problematic as our constituents attempt to utilize the COVID-19 relief programs that Congress passed to help hard-working Americans weather the pandemic. For example, the delay in amended returns for local small businesses has significantly delayed the timely receipt of funds from the Small Business Administration. Additionally, Congress fought to pass unemployment tax relief for those individuals receiving COVID-19 unemployment benefits. A delay in processing the amended returns used to reconcile this tax forgiveness has negatively impacted our constituents who relied on this tax relief. Despite these compounding factors, TAS refuses to help on these amended returns and considers these issues as “solely involving the processing of an individual or business amended return.”

Finally, it is concerning that TAS has not made any significant progress in the November Taxpayer Advocate Directive “directing the IRS to complete processing all backlogged amended tax returns by December 29, 2021 or provide a detailed plan for completing processing the backlog.” As of the second week in January, the IRS still has 6 million individual tax returns, 2.3 million unprocessed individual amendments, and 436,000 business amendments to complete. TAS also has not shared any communication secured from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regarding the completion of this backlog.

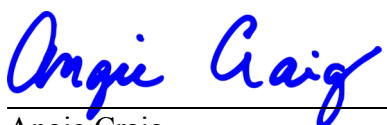
These issues must be addressed. Families in our districts across the country rely on timely tax returns to plan annual budgets and make important financial decisions. They deserve high quality service and prompt responses to their inquiries. While we appreciate and understand the increased strain and workload at the TAS and IRS because of the COVID-19 pandemic, at the end of the day, no one has been hit harder than hard-working American families.

We stand ready to work with you on any legislative action that may be required to address these challenges. And we call on TAS to push the IRS to complete the backlog of amended returns,

work on individual amended return cases, and prioritize expert customer service for taxpayers across the country.

Thank you, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



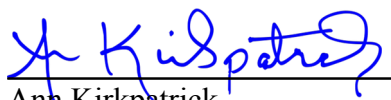
Angie Craig
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress




Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



Elaine G. Luria
Member of Congress



Lucy McBath
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Betty McCollum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Betty McCollum
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dean Phillips". The signature is stylized, with a large, bold "D" and "P" that are connected.

Dean Phillips
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eleanor H. Norton". The signature is cursive and elegant, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David J. Trone". The signature is cursive and fluid, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

David J. Trone
Member of Congress