

AICPA Speaks at Senate Finance Committee Hearing Highlighting IRS Customer Service Issues – “CPAs Feel Powerless”



Washington, D.C. (February 18, 2022) – During a [hearing](#) held by the Senate Finance Committee on *Spotlighting IRS Customer Service Challenges*, Tax Executive Committee (TEC) Chair for the [American Institute of CPAs](#) (AICPA) and practicing CPA, Jan Lewis, opened her testimony by letting the Senators know, “...I’m here today because there’s still time to salvage this filing season, or at least make a difference.” She shared specific challenges her clients are facing in navigating through the IRS service issues and remarked, “...at times, we as CPAs feel powerless.”

Also testifying before the Senate Finance Committee was National Taxpayer Advocate Erin Collins, whose concern and several proposed solutions mirror those that the AICPA and the Tax Professionals United for Taxpayer Relief Coalition have submitted.

Senators from both sides of the aisle expressed their commitment to improving service, agreeing that Congress should be part of the solution to fix the troubles taxpayers and practitioners are experiencing with the IRS. Senators also expressed concern over a need for long-term solutions. Lewis acknowledged that while long-term solutions are certainly important, taxpayers and practitioners are in desperate need of solutions *now* for the current filing season.

Lewis commended recent steps taken by the IRS in reaction to the growing concerns, particularly the suspension of automated notices and letters. “However, we must urge the Service to move as quickly as possible to offer all available reasonable measures of relief, as we are already in the throes of filing season. Time is of the essence,” she said.

Lewis outlined the recommendations the AICPA believes the IRS can implement now, on its own:

- Temporarily postpone automated compliance actions;
- Adjust account hold times;
- Liberalize the reasonable cause penalty waiver process; and
- Provide taxpayers with targeted relief from both the underpayment of estimated tax and the late payment penalties.

The hearing highlighted a willingness and desire by Members of Congress to support these recommendations and urge the IRS to comply. The steps already taken by the IRS to mitigate anticipated challenges is a start, but more must be done to provide significant and meaningful relief to all.

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