

Congress of the United States

Washington, D.C. 20515

May 10, 2011

Commissioner Douglas H. Shulman
Internal Revenue Service
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1111 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20224

Dear Commissioner Shulman:

As you are aware, the cost of gasoline has risen sharply in recent months. According to AAA, the national average price for a gallon of regular gasoline is \$3.97, up from \$2.89 a year ago and nearly 90 cents per gallon more than the price at the beginning of 2011. This rapid increase has led many consumers to rightfully worry that the costs of operating an automobile may soon prove to be prohibitive — dealing a potential crushing blow to individuals and businesses already struggling to survive in this economy.

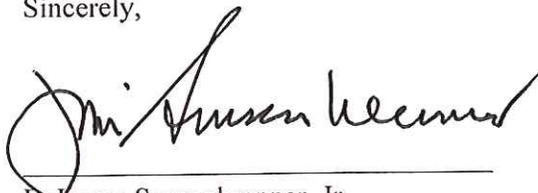
There are many factors that have contributed to this sudden spike in gas prices. The complexity of how gas prices fluctuate means that there is no quick fix for the rising cost of gas. Further troubling however is the uncertainty of how high gas prices will go before they peak.

As IRS Commissioner, one way you can provide some relief to our constituents is to reevaluate the optional standard mileage rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile. As you know, the current rate of 51 cents per mile was set at the end of last year. Since gas prices have risen sharply since then, this rate is probably not an accurate gauge of the cost of operating an automobile.

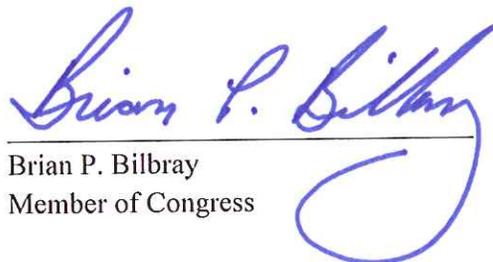
Adjusting the rate mid-year is not unprecedented. In 2008, when gas prices were again reaching record levels, you increased the rate for the second half of the year. When doing this, you said, “We want the reimbursement to be fair to taxpayers.” We are now faced with a similar situation in which high gas prices are hurting individual Americans.

We ask that you reevaluate the standard mileage rates, and consider again making a mid-year adjustment. This important step will benefit many Americans who are hoping for some relief from unbearably high gas prices. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.
Member of Congress



Brian P. Bilbray
Member of Congress

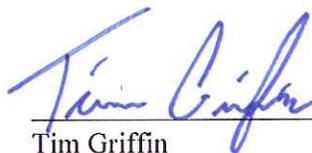
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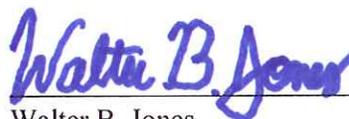
Dan Burton
Member of Congress



Tim Griffin
Member of Congress



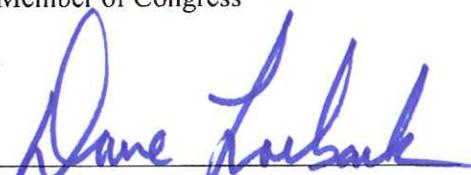
Nan Hayworth
Member of Congress



Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress



Larry Kissell
Member of Congress



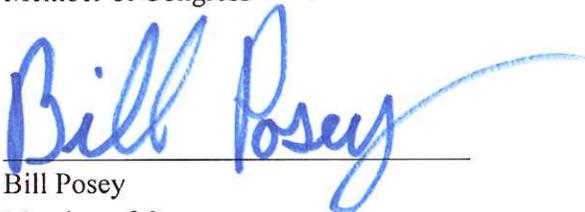
David Loeb sack
Member of Congress



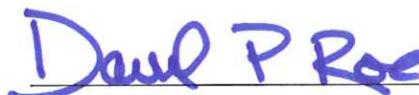
Ron Paul
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Bill Posey
Member of Congress



Phil Roe
Member of Congress