

F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, JR.
FIFTH DISTRICT, WISCONSIN
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
CRIME, TERRORISM, AND
HOMELAND SECURITY
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4905
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The Honorable John Koskinen
Commissioner
Internal Revenue Service
1111 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20224

Dear Commissioner Koskinen:

I am writing about an important matter that has been brought to my attention by taxpayers in the 5th District.

Recently, I have heard from my constituents that are having difficulties upholding their civic duty to pay their federal taxes. The problem they have identified stems from an apparent recent Internal Revenue Service (IRS) policy change to no longer supply hard copies of IRS forms and instructions in a reasonable way. If a taxpayer does not have internet access, and therefore will file a paper return, the taxpayer must call a toll free number to request that the form(s) be sent via US Postal Service; or, must visit a local library to access the IRS website, download and print the form (numbers of print copies of tax products IRS previously sent to libraries and post offices have been dramatically reduced.); or hire a tax professional to file their return. In addition to great inconvenience, these options are costly to taxpayers.

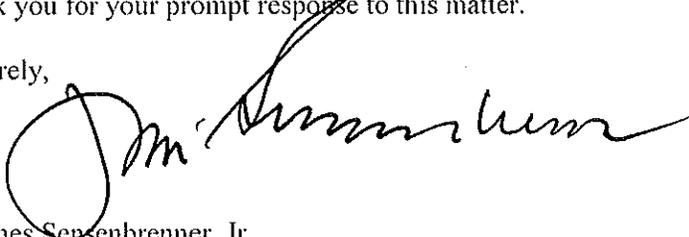
In fact, IRS Publication 17, *Your Federal Income Tax*, the booklet containing instructions important to many taxpayers as they prepare their returns, is not available in print from the IRS. Instead, it must be ordered through the Government Printing Office for a cost of \$23.00. To make matters worse, many who have tried to order forms through the IRS form hotline cannot get through, nor can they reach anyone on the general tax advice hotline. This severely hinders them from receiving important tax law advice to ensure their returns comport with IRS issued rules and current tax law.

I am inquiring as to what steps are being taken to remedy this problem and ensure all taxpayers are given a fair chance to fully understand the law. In its mission statement, the IRS acknowledges that it exists to "provide America's taxpayers top quality service by helping them understand and meet their tax responsibilities and enforce the law with integrity and fairness to all." At this point, it appears the IRS is falling woefully short of its own stated objectives. To say the least, these reports are concerning and raise questions about whether the IRS is taking this situation seriously or playing politics with budget cuts.

While I realize that many federal agencies, including the IRS, have experienced reduced funding levels, we owe it to taxpayers to assist them in fulfilling their obligation to file their taxes correctly on time.

Thank you for your prompt response to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.
Member of Congress