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United States Senate

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The Honorable J. Russell George
Inspector General for Tax Administration
U.S. Department of Treasury
901 D Street, SW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20024-2169

Dear Mr. George,

Thank you for your continued service to America's taxpayers!

In April 2019, TIGTA released a report, "[Improvements Are Needed to Ensure That Employee Tax Compliance Cases Are Adjudicated Consistently](#)," that found 1,250 IRS employees had not paid their tax bills in full or on time, including hundreds of whom were willfully delinquent or repeat offenders, and that the tax collecting agency had done little to discipline these tax cheats on its own payroll.

A 2017 TIGTA review, "[The Internal Revenue Service Continues to Rehire Former Employees With Conduct and Performance Issues](#)," found that the IRS rehired hundreds of former employees who "had been terminated from the IRS or separated while under investigation for a substantiated conduct or performance issue." The rehires included some who were fired or resigned for "willful failure to properly file their Federal tax returns."

Earlier this month Congress passed and President Biden signed legislation to **double** the size of the IRS workforce so the agency can more aggressively audit America's taxpayers. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office says with the supersized staff, the IRS audit rate "[would rise for all taxpayers](#)," regardless of income, which will "result in some audits of taxpayers who would later be determined not to owe additional taxes."

Innocent, hardworking Americans should not be subjected to unfair and costly IRS audits when the agency is ignoring tax cheats on its own payroll.

As TIGTA [noted](#) in the 2019 report, "as the agency of the Federal Government primarily responsible for administering the Federal tax law, Internal Revenue Service (IRS) employees have a higher expectation and responsibility for full tax compliance."

Taxpayers in Iowa and across the country wholeheartedly agree with this assessment.

To ensure greater accountability, I would request that TIGTA conduct updated reviews of the IRS's employment practices to determine how many agency employees are not currently fully compliant on their tax debts and how many rehires on the IRS payroll were previously separated for performance issues, including failure to fully pay their taxes, and what actions the agency is taking, if any, to remedy these compliance issues.

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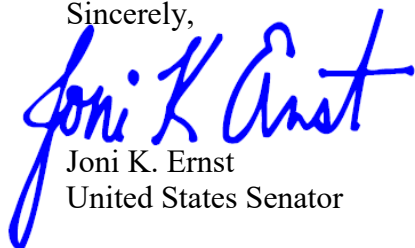
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Thank you again and please do not hesitate to contact me or Roland Foster of my staff at (202) 224-3254 or Roland_Foster@ernst.senate.gov if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joni K. Ernst". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Joni" is written in a larger, more prominent script, followed by "K." and "Ernst".

Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator