

Congressman Sam Johnson

News Release



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Johnson: Allowing the IRS to file your tax return is like asking the fox to guard the hen house.

Today U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson (3rd Dist.-Texas), a member of the Ways and Means Committee, introduced important legislation to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) from getting into the business of preparing tax returns.

“Allowing the IRS to file your tax return is like asking the fox to guard the hen house,” said Johnson.

Johnson introduced the Taxpayer Freedom to File Protection Act, H.R. xxx, to ensure that the IRS does not start filing taxes for people in the name of “customer service.” Johnson proposed the Act in response to new legislation. Earlier this year a Democrat lawmaker from Tennessee unveiled a bill to allow taxpayers who do not itemize to have the IRS file taxes for them.

Johnson feels that creating a return-free tax system could very well stack the deck against taxpayers. Under such a system, the IRS will face a conflict of interest between collecting the most taxpayer dollars possible and fairly filling out tax returns. Much like with property tax bills, it will be up to the taxpayer to challenge the IRS if they disagree with the IRS’ prepared tax return, unlike today where it is up to the IRS to challenge a taxpayer’s return.

Former Commissioner Mark W. Everson said it best in 2006: “the IRS believes that private industry, given its established expertise and experience in the field of electronic tax preparation, has a proven track record in providing the best technology and services available. Rather than entering the tax software business, IRS’ partnership with private industry: (1) provides taxpayers with high quality services by using the existing private sector expertise; (2) maximizes consumer choice; (3) promotes competition within the marketplace; and (4) meets these objectives at the least cost to taxpayers.”

“Until there is fundamental tax reform, the answer to easing the compliance burden for taxpayers isn’t for the IRS to have more control and power. This is about protecting the taxpayer’s fundamental right to legally pay the smallest tax bill possible,” concluded Johnson, who represents portions of Dallas and Collin Counties.

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