

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 7, 2017

The Honorable Steven Mnuchin
Secretary
U.S. Department of Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20220

Dear Secretary Mnuchin,

We write to express our concern over the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) use of flyers promoting the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). These flyers have been delivered to taxpayers with their tax refunds. (See example enclosed.)

Senator Mike Enzi brought this issue to your attention during your Senate Finance Committee nomination hearing on January 19, 2017. You mentioned that you wanted to understand why the IRS had taken on this practice, but that it did not make sense for the IRS to do it.

In the past, these flyers have been sent out in envelopes delivering tax refunds and have solicited stories from taxpayers about money. The CFPB has reportedly included similar flyers seeking consumer complaints in IRS refund mailings in 2013 and 2014. We are aware that the IRS plans to continue sending out CFPB flyers during this filing season.

The CFPB has the power to examine and impose reporting requirements on financial institutions, enforce certain consumer protection laws and regulations, and make certain rules and regulations. We do not believe the CFPB has the authority to use the IRS as a conduit to solicit Americans' stories about money. Additionally, since the CFPB is funded by a transfer of non-appropriated funds from the Federal Reserve System's combined earnings, we question whether it is appropriate to use taxpayer dollars – vis-à-vis unappropriated Federal Reserve monies – to advertise the CFPB, as it appears the IRS did by including this mailing with tax refunds. Lastly, because the CFPB is supposed to be an independent organization, we do not believe the Treasury Department should be soliciting information on behalf of the entity. We respectfully request that Treasury's Bureau of Fiscal Service curtail this practice in the event that either the IRS continues this practice or if it has plans to do so in the future.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Michael B. Enzi
United States Senator



Ron Johnson
United States Senator

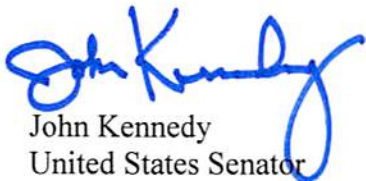
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