

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 1, 2020

The Honorable Steven T. Mnuchin
Secretary of the Treasury
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20220

The Honorable Charles P. Rettig
Commissioner
Internal Revenue Service
1111 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20224

Secretary Mnuchin and Commissioner Rettig:

The bipartisan CARES Act provides direct payments (“recovery rebates”) to lower- and middle- income Americans, including Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries, to help them weather the storm during this pandemic.

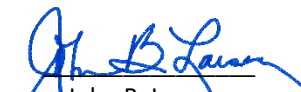
We are extremely displeased to see the IRS guidance recently notifying the public that Social Security and Supplemental Security beneficiaries who did not file tax returns in 2018 or 2019 must file a return in order to get the rebate. This requirement presents substantial and unnecessary hardships for these beneficiaries and delays critical relief for our most vulnerable citizens. Our understanding when this was agreed to by both sides of the aisle was that SSA beneficiaries would be paid directly.

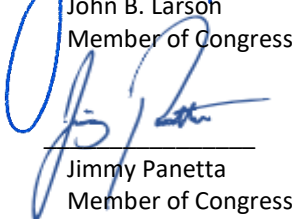
Given that the Social Security Administration has contact and payment information for approximately 70 million beneficiaries that could expedite relief, the House Democratic bill would have paid Social Security and Supplemental Security Income beneficiaries immediately and required any overpayment to be made up on the individual’s tax return. The Social Security Administration would have sent the payments to the beneficiaries as they do regular benefits and could have done this very quickly.

Tens of millions of SSA beneficiaries, particularly SSI recipients and the 1 in 4 seniors who depend almost exclusively on Social Security to make ends meet^[1], do not file returns. These individuals include some of the most vulnerable who are unlikely to have the capability to file a return. This will cause substantial delay for those who need it most and may result in many never receiving assistance at all.

We strongly urge you to reconsider the guidance requiring Social Security and Supplemental Security Income beneficiaries to complete an onerous and unnecessary process, and instead urge you to ensure that these beneficiaries receive their recovery rebate payments automatically.

Sincerely,


John B. Larson
Member of Congress


Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress


Dan K. Davis
Member of Congress


Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress


Bill Pascrell
Member of Congress

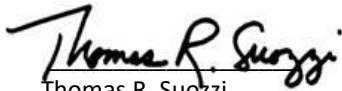

Mike Thompson
Member of Congress

^[1] <https://www.cbpp.org/research/social-security/policy-basics-top-ten-facts-about-social-security>

John Lewis
John Lewis
Member of Congress


Terri Sewell
Terri Sewell
Member of Congress


Dan Kildee
Dan Kildee
Member of Congress

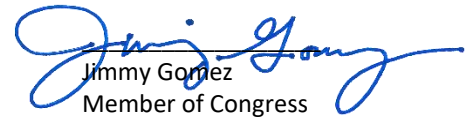

Thomas R. Suozzi
Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress

Suzan DelBene
Suzan DelBene
Member of Congress

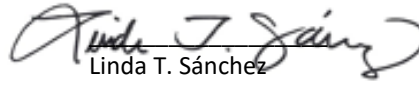
Brendon F. Boyle
Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress

Nydia M. Velázquez
Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress


Dwight Evans
Dwight Evans
Member of Congress


Jimmy Gomez
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Judy Chu
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Linda T. Sánchez
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Bradley S. Schneider
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Brian Higgins
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Stephanie Murphy
Stephanie Murphy
Member of Congress

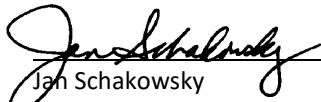

Gwen Moore
Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

Donald S. Beyer Jr.
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Member of Congress

Sheila Jackson Lee
Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

Jerrold Nadler
Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

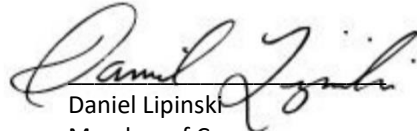
David N. Cicilline
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