

**COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515**

September 30, 2020

Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Trump,

I write regarding the explosive revelations published by the New York Times concerning your tax returns.¹ These reports highlight abusive and disgraceful tax practices that should make any American ashamed. To your predecessors, serving as Chief Executive was the honor of a lifetime. For you, however, the presidency is nothing more than another target to be looted to line your pockets with taxpayer, political donor and foreign government funds and, more egregiously, to dodge taxes. The American people deserve better.

According to the New York Times, you paid only \$750 in income tax in each of 2016 and 2017. For context, constituents in my district with salaries between \$10,000 and \$25,000 pay approximately that amount in income tax. The New York Times found that you paid no income tax in 10 of the previous 15 years and received a colossal \$72.9 million refund from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the legitimacy of which remains in dispute. In 2017, you paid 400 times more in tax to the Philippines and India than you did to the U.S. government. You like to tell your supporters “America First,” but the rule you live by is “Trump First, America Last.”

The New York Times report also reveals just how much you stand to personally gain by being re-elected. For starters, you would remain in a position that allows you to continue to shape national tax policy for your personal benefit. Chronic tax cheats like yourself should not hold this power. Second, you would retain control over the IRS and its purported decade-long audit of your tax returns, which we now know could result in a \$100 million tax bill for you. Third, being re-elected would allow you to dodge or negotiate down at least \$421 million in debt for which you are personally responsible and most of which will come due within the next four years. Your business failures make you vulnerable to blackmail and extortion. For all we know, you have already shaped our national or foreign policy because of pressures related to your colossal debts. Given what we have learned about you over the past four years, I know there is no length to which you would not go to avoid paying a penny more than you need to, let alone half a billion dollars. Your continued office-holding endangers our national security.

In a press conference on September 27 and in tweets on September 28, you claimed that the New York Times report is “fake news.”ⁱⁱ This notion has been parroted by several of your partisans in Congress and elsewhere. Most recently, House Ways and Means Ranking Member Kevin Brady questioned “the article’s accuracy.”ⁱⁱⁱ Well, Mr. Trump, you alone have the power to disprove it. What do you say? I urge you to release your tax returns as every one of your predecessors has done for more than 40 years and set the record straight. As your own IRS Commissioner has admitted, nothing precludes you from doing so right now.

What are you afraid of?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Pascrell Jr." The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Bill Pascrell, Jr., *Chairman*
Subcommittee on Oversight
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives

ⁱ Russ Buettner, Susanne Craig and Mike McIntire, “Long-Concealed Records Show Trump’s Chronic Losses and Years of Tax Avoidance,” N.Y. Times (Sept. 27, 2020), <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/09/27/us/donald-trump-taxes.html>.

ⁱⁱ Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump), Twitter (Sept. 28, 2020, 10:29 AM), <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1310587468731879431>.

ⁱⁱⁱ Statement of House Ways and Means Committee Ranking Member Kevin Brady (Sept. 28, 2020), <https://gop-waysandmeans.house.gov/brady-calls-for-investigation-into-potentially-criminal-leak-of-trumps-private-tax-info/>.