



February 22, 2021

The Honorable Richard E. Neal
Chairman
Ways & Means Committee
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin Brady
Ranking Member
Ways & Means Committee
1139 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Chairman
Subcommittee on Oversight
Ways & Means Committee
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Kelly
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Oversight
Ways & Means Committee
1139 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Neal, Ranking Member Brady, Chairman Pascrell and Ranking Member Kelly,

On behalf of our 38 million members and all older Americans nationwide, AARP writes to express our support for extending the 2021 federal tax filing season. Many older Americans, who are most at risk from COVID-19, require assistance in preparing their tax returns and may not have access to or familiarity with online platforms to fill out their forms over the internet. To protect public health and ensure all tax filers, including older Americans, receive the time and assistance they need to file their taxes, Congress should extend the tax filing deadline and waive all interest and penalties resulting from any such extension.

AARP appreciates the leadership of Chairman Pascrell and Ranking Member Kelly for their recent Subcommittee on Oversight hearing on free tax preparation services. AARP is proud of the work done by the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide staff and volunteers who have helped over 68 million Americans with their taxes since the beginning of the program. Current demand for these services remains high during the pandemic.

There are also ongoing questions around economic impact payments, and tax forms may be more complex for those who did not receive correct payments in 2020. At the same time, reports indicate the Internal Revenue Service is experiencing overwhelming demand on their phone lines, making it challenging for people to get answers to their questions. According to a recent *Politico* report, only one out of 11 phone calls to the agency is even being answered.

AARP believes an extension of the current tax filing season is appropriate to accommodate the additional strain these challenges and others place on individual tax filers, especially older Americans. At the same time, we believe that anyone who chooses to file a federal income tax return now in order to receive a refund should be able to do so. During this time of continuing economic difficulties, refunds will be an important source of financial relief to millions of Americans. An extension of the filing deadline should not prevent anyone who wants to file a return from doing so.

Once again, AARP thanks the committee for its recent hearing on free tax preparation services during the pandemic and urges you to work together to extend this year's tax filing deadline to protect the health and financial security of older and at risk Americans. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, or have your staff contact Tom Nicholls on our Government Affairs staff at tnicholls@aarp.org or (202) 434-3765.

Sincerely,



Bill Sweeney
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs