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Seven Bills To Curb IRS Power Pass The House On Tax Day

The House of Representatives passed numerous bills Tax Day to curb what Republicans claim are IRS abuses. The seven bills were all sponsored by Republicans on the Ways and Means Committee. All passed the House by a voice vote, with no members of Congress objecting, including Democrats. "This is about stamping out a culture of arrogance at the IRS," Speaker John Boehner said in a statement after the votes. Here are the seven bills:

1. Force the IRS to Implement the Taxpayer Bill of Rights. The IRS has a bill of rights posted [online](#), but Republicans want a better one. The Taxpayer Bills of Rights Act (H.R. 1058) will codify as a core responsibility of the IRS Commissioner and all agency employees the right of American taxpayers to quality service, to privacy, to pay no more than the correct amount of tax, and to challenge the IRS's position and be heard.



Lois Lerner testifies before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee March 5, 2014.

2. Prevent the IRS from Targeting Donors to Non-Profits. Over the past few years, the IRS has threatened to subject contributions to conservative organizations to the gift tax in yet another attempt to exploit its influence to crack down on groups whose political beliefs do not align with its own. The Fair Treatment for All Gifts Act (H.R. 1104) will permanently ensure that the IRS cannot use the gift tax for political intimidation.

3. Prohibit IRS Employees from Using their Personal Email Accounts. Events over the past few months underscore the importance of maintaining transparent record keeping procedures for Executive Branch employees. The IRS Email Transparency Act (HR 1152) will increase accountability at the IRS by prohibiting employees, many of whom handle confidential taxpayer information, from using personal email accounts when conducting official government business.

4. Stop IRS Abuse of Taxpayer Privacy Protections. The IRS has admitted to leaking confidential taxpayer information from several organizations to liberal journalism outlets. The Taxpayer Knowledge of IRS Investigations Act (H.R. 1026), will end this misuse of the tax code that has allowed IRS employees to violate the privacy rights of American citizens and then prevent those same protects for their own cover.

5. Allow Social Welfare Groups to Self-Declare their Tax-Exempt Status. The IRS has attempted to stifle conservative groups through indefinite delays of the tax-exempt status process. Rather than merely rejecting an organization's request for 501(c)(4) status, the IRS has targeted applicants by stalling to make a decision for months and even years in some cases. H.R. 1295 will allow social welfare groups, like 527 tax-exempt organizations, to self-declare their status rather than being subject to extraordinary delays and inappropriate questioning due to their political views.

6. Permit Organizations to Appeal Denied Requests for Tax-Exempt Status. In the past, some 501(c)4 applicants who endure this grueling process drew additional scrutiny from Washington, D.C. officials and arbitrarily precluded from the appeal rights afforded to other applications. H.R. 1314 will allow these organizations the fundamental right to appeal adverse determinations by the IRS to ensure a fair and impartial review process.

7. Fire Employees Found Guilty of Targeting Americans for Political Purposes. The Preventing Targeting at the IRS Act (H.R. 709) ensures that any IRS employee found guilty of targeting individuals or groups based on their political affiliation should be fired immediately. It's about time we hold government agencies accountable for their mistreatment of American citizens.

Rep. Paul Ryan, Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee released a statement praising their passage in the full House before turning the subject toward his goal of overhauling the entire tax code.

"We've said from Day One that we're going to clean up the IRS, and these bills are a key part of that effort," Ryan said. "These are common-sense, bipartisan reforms that will provide real accountability and help make sure people are never

unfairly targeted again ... If we really want to give relief to taxpayers and create opportunity in our country, we need to overhaul our broken tax code to make it simpler, flatter, and fairer for all Americans. These bills are a firm step forward.”

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