

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS
COMMERCE
HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

November 19, 2020

The Honorable Charles P. Rettig
Commissioner
Internal Revenue Service
1111 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20224

Dear Commissioner Rettig:

I write with great concern about the Internal Revenue Service's continued delay in processing tax returns and issuing tax refunds to millions of taxpayers who filed their taxes earlier this year. The IRS must develop a strategy and dedicate ample resources to processing these tax returns in a timelier fashion.

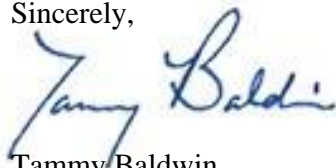
In March 2020, the IRS closed physical processing sites to protect employees from the COVID-19 pandemic. While this was a necessary step for IRS to take, it has led to massive backlogs that the agency has yet to overcome. As a result, millions of taxpayers are still waiting to receive their tax refunds, as their tax returns sit in piles and boxes yet to be opened.

Moreover, I am learning that some Submission Processing Units that are responsible for processing tens of thousands of tax returns remain severely behind and are understaffed. Until very recently, some units were not accepting referrals or requests from the Taxpayer Advocate Service, contributing to the massive delays.

These delays are only worsening financial hardships brought on by the pandemic. Unemployment, evictions and food insecurity are very real concerns for many families and individuals. I have heard from far too many Wisconsinites who are unsure how they will pay next month's rent and utilities or cover other necessary expenses—which will only become more dangerous in Wisconsin's winter months.

The IRS must work much more quickly to process the millions of backlogged tax returns and send refunds to all taxpayers who are still waiting to receive the money they are owed. Americans everywhere are relying on receipt of their tax refunds during these challenging times, and the IRS must take this responsibility seriously.

Sincerely,



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator