

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 3, 2020

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

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

Dear Secretary Mnuchin and Commissioner Rettig:

As you work to implement the economic impact payments, or rebates, in the recent CARES Act, we applaud your decision to ensure that all Social Security beneficiaries receive their rebates automatically, whether or not they have filed a recent tax return. This decision will ensure immediate, seamless delivery of these payments to nearly 60 million seniors and people with disabilities.

However, this is not enough. As the Chairs of the Committees and Subcommittees with jurisdiction over the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program and Veterans Affairs (VA) compensation and pension benefits, we strongly urge you to extend similar treatment to the millions of other vulnerable individuals who are receiving those benefits. Like Social Security beneficiaries, these individuals are among the most vulnerable in our society, and most of them normally do not need to file taxes. They include extremely low-income seniors, people with severe disabilities, and disabled and homeless veterans who have served our country. Many lack the capacity or resources to file taxes, especially during the current pandemic when tax assistance sites are closed and many other normal resources are unavailable. As a result, requiring these individuals to file taxes in order to receive a rebate payment is tantamount to barring many of them from payments altogether. This is unacceptable.

The federal government has the capacity to pay rebates automatically to SSI and VA recipients, and there is no excuse for not doing so. The Social Security Administration and VA each already provide monthly payment files to Treasury with the names and direct deposit or other payment information for their beneficiaries. We call upon Treasury to immediately release guidance clarifying that it will use this existing data to pay rebates automatically to SSI and VA recipients, whether or not they have filed a recent tax return.

Congress intended these rebate payments as immediate assistance to Americans during the current time of crisis. Requiring SSI and VA recipients to file tax returns in order to get the payments would create artificial and needless bureaucratic hurdles for millions of the most vulnerable individuals in our society, and would put them at risk of experiencing a delay or a complete inability to receive their payments. We strongly urge you to prevent this unacceptable

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outcome by paying rebates automatically to all SSI and VA recipients, whether or not they have filed a recent tax return.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this urgent matter.

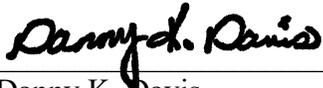
Sincerely,



Richard E. Neal
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives



Mark Takano
Chairman
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
U.S. House of Representatives



Danny K. Davis
Chairman
Subcommittee on Worker and Family Support
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives

cc:

The Honorable Robert Wilkie, Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs

The Honorable Andrew Saul, Commissioner, Social Security Administration