

Richard G. Thissen
National President



Jon Dowie
National Secretary/Treasurer

January 30, 2017

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Chaffetz, Ranking Member Cummings and Members of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform:

On behalf of the five million federal employees, retirees and their survivors represented by the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), I urge you to oppose the Tax Accountability Act of 2017, H.R. 396, which would make individuals with an unpaid tax liability ineligible for federal employment.

NARFE firmly believes that federal employees, and all Americans, should pay their full share of taxes on time. However, this bill seeks to address a problem that doesn't exist and represents an attack on public servants by leading the public to believe they are grossly delinquent in paying their taxes. In reality, 97.73 percent of federal employees are tax compliant – a figure far better than the national average and that of members of Congress.

This bill would create the opposite of its intent by leading to an inefficient use of taxpayer resources. Previous congressional budget scoring of this proposal has shown it would raise negligible revenue, while adding administrative costs, making it a creator of federal waste, not savings. Federal agencies would be tasked with tax enforcement by ensuring that employees and applicants have no unpaid tax liability, forcing them to shift resources from areas of greater concern.

Further, this bill would be counterproductive, as individuals with a source of income are far more capable of paying their delinquent taxes. Forcing someone into unemployment increases the likelihood that their debt will never be repaid. Instead, Congress should work to bolster programs such as the Federal Employee/Retiree Delinquency Initiative (FERDI) and the Federal Payment Levy Program (FPLP), which have successfully collected delinquent taxes from federal employees.

For these reasons, we urge you to oppose the Tax Accountability Act of 2017. Thank you for considering NARFE's views. If you have any questions or comments regarding this request, please contact NARFE Legislative Director Jessica Klement at 703-838-7760 or jklement@narfe.org.

Sincerely,



Richard G. Thissen
National President

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

www.NARFE.org | 606 N. Washington Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 | **phone** 703-838-7760 | **fax** 703-838-7785

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