



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3222

June 3, 2022

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

Dear Commissioner Rettig,

In recent weeks, numerous seniors, families, and individuals from New York's 22nd Congressional District have contacted my office regarding delays from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in processing their 2021 paper tax returns and issuing refunds. Many rely on their hard-earned money to make ends meet in these challenging times of soaring costs and skyrocketing inflation. Others have been left wondering whether they will owe the federal government any extra taxes. Regardless, they are all in the same position of having to wait on answers from your agency, which never seem to come.

The average tax refund amounts to a month and a half of pay, and my constituents, along with many others across our country, rely on the money they receive back from their tax refunds to cover necessities, pay off debt, and keep their families afloat. I understand the unique challenges your agency faced as we emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet I note there is a certain irony in that returns with payments due are not delayed and incoming checks are cashed promptly. At this point, the federal government must do better not only to process outstanding returns and to deliver refunds, but also to ensure individuals are apprised of the status of their transactions. For example, the "Where's My Refund?" and the "Get My Payment" features of the website have not worked at all for most of my constituents.

It also has come to my attention that because many seniors and individuals on Social Security file traditional paper returns, they are impacted disproportionately by these delays. The six to seven months they are having to wait is entirely unreasonable. Our senior citizens, many of whom live on fixed incomes, suffer the most during these inflationary times, the last thing they need now is the added stress of not knowing whether they will be able to put food on the table or afford their life-saving prescriptions.

The IRS must make better use of its resources to serve our communities adequately. Our seniors, families, and taxpaying citizens have waited far too long for money that is rightfully theirs. I look forward to your prompt resolution of these outstanding cases, and I look forward to hearing any updates you may have for me as this situation continues to evolve.

Sincerely,

CLAUDIA TENNEY
Member of Congress