

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0909**

MAIN DISTRICT OFFICE  
804 BRYAN STREET, KISSIMMEE, FL 34741  
T: (407) 452-1171 | F: (202) 225-9742

April 4, 2019

The Honorable Mike Quigley  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Financial Services and  
General Government  
Committee on Appropriations  
B-300 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Graves  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Financial Services and  
General Government  
Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Quigley and Ranking Member Graves:

As you craft this year's Financial Service and General Government Appropriations Act, I respectfully request the inclusion of the following legislative language and programmatic funding levels:

**Bill Language**

**Language Request #1**

**TAXPAYER SERVICES**

*SEC. \_\_\_\_ . For necessary expenses of the Internal Revenue Service to provide taxpayer services, including pre-filing assistance and education, filing and account services, taxpayer advocacy services, and other services as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109, at such rates as may be determined by the Commissioner, \$2,491,554,000, of which \$10,000,000 shall be for the Tax Counseling for the Elderly Program; of which \$12,000,000 shall be available for low-income taxpayer clinic grants; of which \$18,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020, shall be available for a Community Volunteer Income Tax Assistance matching grants program for tax return preparation assistance, of which not less than \$207,000,000 shall be available for operating expenses of the Taxpayer Advocate Service: Provided, That of the amounts made available for the Taxpayer Advocate Service, not less than \$6,000,000 shall be for identity theft casework.*

Language Request #2

POSTAL SERVICE

*SEC. \_\_\_. The Postal Service shall maintain and comply with service standards for First Class mail and periodicals effective on July 1, 2012.*

Language Request #3

POSTAL SERVICE

*SEC. \_\_\_. None of the funds provided in this Act shall be used to consolidate or close small rural and other small post offices and Mail Processing Facilities in fiscal year 2018.*

Language Request #4

GENERAL PROVISIONS – GOVERNMENT-WIDE – DACA FULL GOVERNMENT

*SEC. \_\_\_. Unless otherwise specified in law during the current fiscal year, no part of any appropriation contained in this or any other Act shall be used to pay the compensation of any officer or employee of the Government of the United States (including any agency the majority of the stock of which is owned by the Government of the United States) whose post of duty is in the continental United States unless such person: (1) is a citizen of the United States; (2) is a person who is lawfully admitted for permanent residence and is seeking citizenship as outlined in 8 U.S.C. 1324b(a)(3)(B); (3) is a person who is admitted as a refugee under 8 U.S.C. 1157 or is granted asylum under 8 U.S.C. 1158 and has filed a declaration of intention to become a lawful permanent resident and then a citizen when eligible; (4) is a person who has been issued an employment authorization document under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program of the Secretary of Homeland Security, established pursuant to the memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled 'Exercising Prosecutorial Discretion with Respect to Individuals Who Came to the United States as Children', dated June 15, 2012; or (5) is a person who owes allegiance to the United States:*

Language Request #5

GENERAL PROVISIONS – GOVERNMENT-WIDE – DACA CONGRESS

*SEC. \_\_\_. Unless otherwise specified in law during the current fiscal year, no part of any appropriation contained in this or any other Act shall be used to pay the compensation of any officer or employee of the Government of the United States (including any agency the majority of the stock of which is owned by the Government of the United States) whose post of duty is in the continental United States unless such person: (1) is a citizen of the United States; (2) is a person who is lawfully admitted for permanent residence and is seeking citizenship as outlined*

*in 8 U.S.C. 1324b(a)(3)(B); (3) is a person who is admitted as a refugee under 8 U.S.C. 1157 or is granted asylum under 8 U.S.C. 1158 and has filed a declaration of intention to become a lawful permanent resident and then a citizen when eligible; (4) is a person who is an officer or employee of the House of Representatives or Senate and who has been issued an employment authorization document under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program of the Secretary of Homeland Security, established pursuant to the memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled 'Exercising Prosecutorial Discretion with Respect to Individuals Who Came to the United States as Children', dated June 15, 2012; or (5) is a person who owes allegiance to the United States:*

## **Report Language**

### **Request #1**

#### DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY – DEPARTMENTAL OFFICES

*Student Debt-* The Committee notes that there is nearly \$1,560,000,000,000 in outstanding student loan debt, of which \$150,000,000,000 is in private student loans. More than 850,000 students have defaulted on private student loans worth more than \$8,100,000,000. The Committee directs Federal bank regulators to further continue efforts to encourage financial institutions to work constructively with private student loan borrowers experiencing financial difficulties and encourages Treasury to work with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the National Credit Union Administration, and the Federal Reserve to offer clear guidance that protects taxpayers and is consistent with safety and soundness principles recognizing the unique characteristics of private student loans compared to other debt and providing flexibility to lenders working with borrowers to avoid default.

### **Request #2**

#### DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY – DEPARTMENTAL OFFICES

*Puerto Rico*—Within 90 days of the date of enactment of this Act, the Department is directed to provide a report to the Committees on Appropriations of the House and Senate describing how the Department has used its authority to provide technical assistance to Puerto Rico in fiscal year 2019 and how it plans to use it in fiscal year 2020.

### **Request #3**

#### TAXPAYER SERVICES

*Identity Theft Tax Refund Fraud.*--The Committee requires a report, reviewed by the National Taxpayer Advocate, from the IRS that covers 2010-2019 period on: the number of taxpayers who have had their tax return rejected because their Social Security or taxpayer identification number was improperly used by another individual to commit tax fraud; the average time to resolve the situation and provide innocent taxpayers with their refund, when a refund is due; and the number

of cases involving taxpayer identification numbers of residents of the territories. The report will also include a discussion on IRS's progress and plans to expedite resolution for these taxpayers, to prevent non-victims from becoming victims, to educate the public on the threat of identity theft, and to detect, prevent, and combat identity-based tax fraud and actions. The Committee directs the IRS to submit the report to the Committees on Appropriations of the House and the Senate within 120 days of enactment of this Act.

#### Request #4

### DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY – DEPARTMENTAL OFFICES

*Office of Financial Education-* The Committee is concerned about the low level of financial literacy and numeracy skills among the adult population of the United States, as one in seven adults do not have the basic financial literacy skills to succeed in all but the most rudimentary financial literacy tasks. The Committee encourages the Department to explore the degree to which current Federal financial literacy programs benefit those individuals with less than basic literacy skills and to develop measurable goals and objectives for the Financial Literacy and Education Commission that address the needs of this population. Finally, the Committee urges the Department to explore opportunities to work with rural community-based adult and family literacy organizations to promote and implement future financial literacy initiatives.

#### Request #5

### FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

*Fraudulent Calls to Seniors-* The Committee notes that there has been a significant uptick in fraudulent telephone calls from people claiming to represent the Social Security Administration to seniors. In many cases, these callers are “spoofing” the actual Social Security hotline number to appear on the recipient’s phone. The Committee urges the Commission to prioritize investigations into robocalls that attempt to defraud senior citizens.

#### Request #6

### FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

*Fraudulent Health Care Calls.*—The Committee is aware of the growing practice of robocallers targeting health care providers and patients in an effort to commit financial fraud. In some cases, callers use a “spoofed” number, making it appear like they are calling from a hospital or physician office, and seek to obtain sensitive health-related or finance-related information about patients. In other cases, callers posing as agents of the Department of Justice or relevant credentialing authorities contact hospitals, questioning the licensing of physicians working at the hospital. These practices pose a direct threat to patients and providers, and undermine the integrity and trust that are vital components of the patient-physician and patient-hospital relationship. The Committee directs the Commission to prioritize investigations into robocalls that attempt to defraud patients, physicians, hospitals, and other health care stakeholders.

## Request #7

### POSTAL SERVICE

*Climate Control Units in USPS Delivery Vehicles.*—As USPS replaces or upgrades its fleet of delivery vehicles, the Committee strongly encourages USPS to take all reasonable steps to ensure that its vehicles are equipped with climate control units in order to protect the health and safety of its mail carriers, especially those working in areas of the country that are subject to extreme temperatures.

## Request #8

### INDEPENDENT AGENCIES - OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

*Federal Government Hiring Process.*—In the report accompanying the Fiscal Year 2018 version of this bill, the Committee directed OPM to report to Congress on its plan to reduce barriers to federal employment, reduce delays in the hiring process, and improve the overall federal recruitment and hiring process. This directive was informed by the fact that numerous studies over the years have identified a range of problems with the federal government’s hiring practices and procedures. In 2018 testimony before Congress, OPM noted that the average “time-to-hire” for Fiscal Year 2017 was approximately 106 days, which includes all hires where a job announcement was posted on the USAJOBS website. This is significantly worse than the 87-day average in Fiscal Year 2012. The Committee continues to be concerned that capable candidates, especially younger Americans with the option to work in either the private or public sector, may be dissuaded from applying for or accepting federal positions due to the length and cumbersome nature of the federal hiring process. To focus on one important aspect of this persistent challenge, the Committee directs OPM, within 90 days of enactment of this Act, to provide a report to the Committees on Appropriations of the House and the Senate on the specific feedback OPM collects from applicants and agencies regarding the USAJOBS website; any barriers to collecting applicant and agency feedback; the steps OPM is taking to improve the user experience on USAJOBS as a result of applicant and agency feedback; and how OPM will measure user satisfaction with future changes to USAJOBS and the overall effectiveness of the website as a recruitment and hiring tool. In addition, the Committee directs the GAO to report on ways to simplify, streamline and otherwise enhance the user experience on USAJOBS.

## Request #9

### FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

*Cryptocurrency.* -Cryptocurrencies are digital assets that use cryptography to secure or verify transactions. They are not created by a government or central bank, but they can be exchanged for U.S. dollars or other government-backed currencies. As consumer interest in cryptocurrencies has grown, so has interest from scammers. Scams involving cryptocurrencies include deceptive investment and business opportunities, bait-and-switch schemes, and deceptively marketed “mining” machines. Together consumer groups, law enforcement, research organizations, and the private sector to explore how scammers are exploiting public interest in cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin and Litecoin and to discuss ways to empower and protect consumers.

## Request #10

### FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

*Territories and Tribal Lands*—The Committee is concerned about the disparity in access to broadband between the territories, tribal lands, and the 50 states. The Committee encourages the Commission to implement policies that increase broadband access and adoption in these areas.

## Request #11

### DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY

*Cybersecurity*- The Committee recognizes the need to protect the financial services sector, its customers, and the U.S. Government systems and infrastructure from the devastating effects of cyberattacks. While both industry and government have taken significant steps to mitigate this threat, there is more work to be done. The Committee encourages continued coordination to develop consistent and workable cybersecurity safeguards across the financial services sector. Consistent with this goal, the Committee directs the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Compliance Policy (OCIP) to report to the Committees on Appropriations of the House and Senate, the Committee on Financial Services of the House, and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate within 60 days of enactment of this Act on the status of this collaboration and ways to improve cybersecurity controls and safeguards, including nanoscale physically unclonable function (PUF) devices.

## Request #12

### OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY - SALARIES AND EXPENSES

*Updated Caribbean Border Counternarcotics Strategy*.—“The Committee continues to be concerned about narcotics trafficking and related violence in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, home to approximately 3.3 million American citizens. The Committee is also concerned about the effect of narcotics trafficking through the Caribbean region on U.S. states, especially communities along the eastern seaboard. The Committee notes that the joint explanatory statement accompanying Public Law 113-76 directed the Office of National Drug Control Policy to develop a biennial Caribbean Border Counternarcotics Strategy, on terms equivalent to the existing Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy and the Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy. The Committee further notes that ONDCP published the Caribbean Border Counternarcotics Strategy in 2015, but has not updated the Strategy since that date. The Committee directs ONDCP to update the Caribbean Border Counternarcotics Strategy, to make it publicly available within 120 days of the date of enactment of this Act, and to continue to update it on a biennial basis, as previously directed.

### Request #13

#### INDEPENDENT AGENCIES – OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

*Enhancing the Utility of the Fedscope Database.*—The Committee notes that Fedscope, a publicly-accessible database maintained by OPM, is a valuable source of information about federal employees and agencies. Fedscope provides national-level and state-level data about the number of federal employees, the agencies that employ them, and selected characteristics of those employees. To enhance its utility to Congress and the general public, the Committee urges OPM to provide information about the number of federal employees employed in each congressional district. Within 120 days of the enactment of this Act, OPM is directed to provide a report to the Committees on Appropriations of the House and the Senate on the feasibility and expected timeline of publishing this information.

### Request #14

#### INDEPENDENT AGENCIES - OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

*Drinking Water.* – The Committee is aware that not all federal agencies provide complimentary filtered drinking water to federal employees. The Committee directs OPM within 90 days of enactment of this Act, to provide a report to the Committees on Appropriations of the House and the Senate on which agencies do and do not provide complimentary filtered drinking water at work and what would be needed to provide complimentary filtered drinking water to all federal employees at work.

### Request #15

#### TAXPAYER SERVICES

*Virtual Currency Taxation Guidance.*--The Committee directs the IRS to issue additional guidance on the tax consequences and basic reporting requirements for taxpayers that use virtual currencies, including acceptable methods for calculating the fair market value of virtual currencies, acceptable methods of determining the cost basis of virtual currency dispositions, and the tax treatment of tokens resulting from virtual currency network forks. The Committee directs the IRS to submit the report to the Committees on Appropriations of the House and the Senate by June 1, 2019.

### Programmatic Funding Levels

#### Request #1

Request \$10,000,000 for the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS's) Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program.

Request #2

Request \$18,000,000 for the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS's) Community Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program.

Request #3

Request \$6,000,000 for the Internal Revenue's Service's (IRS's) Taxpayer Advocate Service for identity theft casework.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Darren Soto  
Member of Congress