HR 5716

May 13, 2008

The Honorable Joe Knollenberg
2349 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Sir,

As your constituent, a taxpayer, and an enrolled agent licensed to represent taxpayers before the Internal Revenue Service, I urge you to cosponsor HR 5716, the Taxpayer Bill of Rights Act of 2005, which was introduced by Congressman Xavier Becerra.

HR 5716 would go a long way toward improving the integrity of the tax filing system and would help protect taxpayers here in Michigan and throughout the country. The bill would require the regulation of all tax preparers, ensuring that everyone paid to prepare tax returns has demonstrated basic ethical and technical standards.

As the IRS National Taxpayer Advocate has observed, unscrupulous or untrained commercial preparers cost the U.S. Treasury hundreds of millions of dollars in uncollected revenue. The findings of a 2006 Government Accountability Office (GAO) investigation further confirm the need for such reforms. Undercover GAO investigators paid preparers at nineteen major tax preparation chain outlets to prepare their tax returns. According to the report, several preparers gave their investigators "very bad tax advice, particularly when it came to reporting non-W-2 business income." Further, all nineteen returns prepared contained errors ranging from overclaims of $2,000 to underclaims of $1,700+.

Regulating paid tax return preparers brings three desirable outcomes. First and foremost, it protects taxpayers from the great harm that comes at the hands of the incompetent and the corrupt. Please remember that your constituents are left holding the bag and dealing with the consequences of these bad actors. Second, it levels the playing field for the honest, skilled return preparers, who have for far too long been forced to compete with fly-by-night preparers who promise huge tax refunds. And third, regulation elevates the entire profession. No longer will interior designers and barbers be certified and required pass a test while anyone is free to prepare income tax returns.

I look forward to your response and your cosponsorship of the Taxpayer Bill of Rights Act of 2008. We deserve no less.

Sincerely,

Melvin Turbow

Melvin Turbow, EA

Melvin L & Heidi J Turbow

home

4734 Seagull Way

West Bloomfield, MI 48323-2065