

Vote No on Resolution to Censure IRS Commissioner John Koskinen

June 14, 2016

Dear Committee Member,

Our organizations strongly urge you to vote against the resolution to censure IRS Commissioner John Koskinen scheduled to be considered on Wednesday, June 15 by the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

The organizations include Democracy 21, Americans for Democratic Action, Campaign Legal Center, Center for Media and Democracy, Common Cause, CREW, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Issue One, National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund, Money Out! People In!, National Organization of Women, People For the American Way, Public Citizen and Small Planet Institute.

Commissioner Koskinen has a long record of accomplished and successful public service in a number of government positions. The case being made against Commissioner Koskinen is meritless. There is no justification for taking the unwarranted action pending before the committee to punish Commissioner Koskinen.

The censure resolution, furthermore, is an approach established by the House to take action against one of its own members. It was not established to take action against an executive branch official and would be wrongly used in this matter.

The censure resolution being proposed is, unfortunately, in line with other unwarranted attacks that House Republicans have made against the IRS. For example, the slashing of IRS budget funds has seriously undermined the ability of the agency to do its job and effectively collect the revenues which the government is entitled to by law. It is the political equivalent of “cutting off your nose to spite your face.”

Riders adopted by House Republicans, furthermore, have prohibited the IRS from adopting new regulations to properly interpret and implement the statutory requirements that apply to section 501(c)(4) organizations and other section 501(c) groups.

This has prevented the IRS from replacing outmoded regulations adopted more than a half century ago with new regulations to govern section 501(c) groups and prevent them from improperly spending secret contributions in federal elections. House Republican riders have blocked the IRS from addressing this serious abuse of the tax laws by 501(c)(4) groups, which is continuing to cause serious harm to the interests of the American people.

Since 2010, more than \$500 million in secret contributions have been spent through section 501(c) groups to influence federal elections. Secret contributions prevent public accountability for improper government actions taken to benefit undisclosed donors.

The committee should abandon its unwarranted, unjustified effort to censure Commissioner Koskinen and let the IRS and Commissioner Koskinen do their job.

We strongly urge you to vote against any resolution to censure or otherwise attack IRS Commissioner John Koskinen.

Democracy 21

Americans for Democratic Action

Campaign Legal Center

Center for Media and Democracy

Common Cause

CREW

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

Issue One

National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund

Money Out! People In!

National Organization of Women

People For the American Way

Public Citizen

Small Planet Institute