



March 4, 2009

Mr. Timothy Geithner, Secretary  
Department of the Treasury  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington D.C. 20220

Re: **Give Struggling Taxpayers a Fresh Start, Stimulate the Economy  
with IRS Amnesty**

Dear Mr. Geithner:

I am a former IRS attorney who has helped everyday people work through their IRS dilemmas for almost 20 years. I have seen through the eyes of both sides of the tax equation. You, too, have a broad view and perspective, having recently been in distress with the IRS, then becoming Secretary of the Treasury.

I am writing to urge you to offer amnesty to the 6.1 million IRS non-filers if they come forward and pay the taxes they owe. This will strengthen, not weaken, our tax system.

For most, life situations lead to dropping out of the tax system, not a desire to gain an advantage. It could be divorce, medical problems, or the challenges of a business during these hard economic times. If the taxes cannot be paid, the returns are often not filed.

Once behind, interest and penalties escalate to the point that a taxpayer can never catch up. The failure to act is magnified by the fact that interest and penalties double the original tax liability every five years. I have seen the discouraged faces of hard-working Americans – paying \$100 monthly on a \$20,000 tax debt - when they discover that the amount they owe is actually increasing, not decreasing, because of the interest and penalties.

For taxpayers who come forward with their taxes, provide amnesty relief from the interest and penalties if the returns are filed and the tax is paid over an agreed upon payment plan. To ensure future compliance, implement a five year probationary period to stay current on all future obligations. Those suspected of tax crimes would not be eligible.

In addition to the non-filers, there are millions of taxpayers who have filed and owe money. They badly want to repay their debt. They try to pay it, but can never break free from the weight of interest and penalties. It holds back their businesses, their lives and the economy. Provide the same relief to them.

Mr. Timothy Geithner  
March 4, 2009  
Page Two

Tax amnesty works. States offering non-filer amnesty have been highly successful raising money and bringing taxpayers back into the system. Nevada recently collected nearly \$41 million between July and October, 2008 from amnesty. Oklahoma generated about twice what it expected, raising \$82 million in 90 days.

If two states could generate \$123 million in less than four months, imagine the benefit by including everyone back into the Federal system?

Tax debt puts lives and economies on hold for years. Employment opportunities are lost and new business ventures delayed; home ownership is an impossibility.

People want a fresh start. We as a country are now dedicated to reclaiming financial stability. IRS amnesty could bring the Treasury billions of needed dollars not just now, but into the future.

I would be happy to meet with you or a representative of the Treasury to discuss moving this proposal forward. My contact information is (513) 489-2555; [howard@voorheeslevy.com](mailto:howard@voorheeslevy.com); and [www.howardlevyirslawyer.com](http://www.howardlevyirslawyer.com).

Sincerely,

  
Howard S. Levy