

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 26, 2022

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

Dear Commissioner Rettig:

I write to urge the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to take action to improve taxpayer service and address the backlog of unprocessed tax returns as soon as possible.

The IRS recently announced that it will begin accepting 2021 tax returns on January 24, 2022. However, many taxpayers have still not received their 2019 or 2020 tax refunds, in many cases requiring the taxpayer to completely refile their return. According to recent reports, last month, your agency had 6 million unprocessed individual tax returns and 2.3 million unprocessed amended individual tax returns.¹

I have heard from Granite Staters who have reached out to the IRS by phone and have been frustrated by hours-long wait times. Recent reports indicate that, in the first half of 2021, the IRS had fewer than 15,000 employees to handle more than 240 million calls, on average one person for every 16,000 calls.² Only 7 percent of callers with questions about their returns were able to reach an actual person on the phone.³

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted staffing at the IRS, more must be done to improve service to taxpayers who call the IRS and to process the backlog of tax returns - especially with the 2021 tax filing season starting soon.⁴ Granite State families need to receive their tax refunds promptly so they can pay their bills. The IRS should specifically devote resources to reducing hold times for taxpayers who call the IRS in need of assistance.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

With every good wish,



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator

¹ <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/01/12/the-irs-is-in-crisis-taxpayer-advocate-warns-of-2022-refund-delays.html>

² <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2022/01/11/irs-tax-refund-questions/>

³ <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/01/11/tax-filers-face-delays-as-the-irs-grapples-with-limited-staffing.html>

⁴ https://www.taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/ARC21_MSP_03_Telephone.pdf