

I urge our colleagues to join us in co-sponsoring and passing the Equity in Law Enforcement Act.

By Ms. COLLINS:

S. 965. A bill to prohibit the use of funds by Internal Revenue Service to target citizens of the United States for exercising any right guaranteed under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise to introduce a bill that would prohibit the IRS from the targeting any U.S. citizens for exercising their constitutional rights under the First Amendment.

The history of the IRS offers abundant examples of the Agency trampling on these rights. In the most recent controversy, which came to light in 2013, the IRS applied a heightened scrutiny to applications from conservative groups that were seeking tax-exempt status. Delaying these groups' applications suggests an attempt to chill the constitutional right of speech and association by groups that hold conservative views. No matter what your political views, the details that have emerged are truly alarming. The IRS admitted that it deliberately targeted conservative groups' applications for tax-exempt status for extra review if they included such words as "tea party," "patriots," or "9/11" in their names. It also acknowledged targeting applications from groups that criticized how this country is being run or whose purpose was to address government spending, government debt, taxes, or simply to make America a better place. These inappropriate criteria stayed in place for more than 18 months and resulted in substantial delays in processing the applications of many different groups. In some cases, the applications remained outstanding for more than 2 years.

The IRS also sought to compel some of the targeted groups to divulge their membership lists. IRS officials have subsequently admitted there was absolutely no reason for Agency personnel to have sought that kind of information.

Such behavior, unfortunately, is not a one-time aberration, and the targets have been on both sides of the aisle. A May 2013 Time magazine article noted that the IRS has been involved in scandals going back at least as far as the Kennedy administration, which used the service to investigate so-called rightwing groups. President Nixon employed a secret IRS operation to investigate and audit political opponents. During the Johnson administration, the IRS targeted some antiwar activists. In the decades since, a number of political activists from both the conservative and liberal ends of the spectrum, as well as whistleblowers, have been subjected to intimidating and discriminatory scrutiny by the IRS.

The IRS's history of abuses demonstrates that Congress must be ever-

vigilant in protecting taxpayers. The Agency's power allows it to pervade the most sensitive aspects of Americans' private lives. Irrespective of whether those singled out are liberal or conservative, Democrat or Republican, Independent or Green Party members, regardless of their personal views, the targeting of private citizens for exercising their First Amendment rights is out of bounds and cannot be tolerated.

Seventeen years ago, when the IRS was accused of using abusive tactics towards taxpayers, Congress responded by passing the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act. That act created the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, strengthened taxpayer protections against unauthorized collection activities, and established an oversight board to ensure that taxpayers are properly treated by the IRS.

The bill I am introducing today builds on the 1998 act, as well as an amendment I authored in 2013, which became law, that prohibited the IRS from using funds provided through the fiscal year 2014 IRS funding bill to target American citizens for exercising their First Amendment rights. That prohibition on the use of funds was continued in the fiscal year 2015 funding bill, and the legislation I am offering today would make that prohibition permanent.

The First Amendment is one of our most cherished and sacred freedoms, and its free exercise must be vigorously protected.

It has been said the power to tax is the power to destroy. The American people cannot and will not tolerate any abuse of that power.

It is imperative that Congress act to make sure the power of the IRS is never again used to harass or abuse Americans for exercising their First Amendment rights. The bill I have introduced is tailored to that end. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD-406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Oversight Hearing: The President's FY 2016 Budget Request for Nuclear Regulatory Commission."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "American Food Aid: Why Reform Matters."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD-106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "IRS Challenges in Implementing the Affordable Care Act."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "The Need to Reform Asset Forfeiture."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 2:45 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 1:30 p.m., in room SD-562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Catch Me If You Can: The IRS Impersonation Scam and the Government's Response."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Seapower of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed

to executive session at 2 p.m., on Thursday, April 16, to consider the following nominations: Calendar No. 1 and Calendar No. 5; that the Senate then vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's actions, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2015

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, April 16; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following leader remarks, the Senate then resume consideration of S. 178, with the time until 11 a.m. divided in the usual form; and finally that the filing deadline for all second-degree amendments to the Cornyn amendment be at 10:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. ENZI. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:34 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, April 16, 2015, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

LINDA STRUYK MILLSAAPS, OF NORTH CAROLINA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE OVERSIGHT BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 14, 2018, VICE PAUL JONES, TERM EXPIRED.

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

THOMAS EDGAR ROTHMAN, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE ARTS FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 3, 2016. (NEW POSITION)

THE JUDICIARY

WILHELMINA MARIE WRIGHT, OF MINNESOTA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA, VICE MICHAEL J. DAVIS, RETIRING.

FOREIGN SERVICE

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

PETER J. OLSON, OF MARYLAND
BENJAMIN I. PETLOCK, OF FLORIDA
NICOLAS RUBIO, OF FLORIDA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED.

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS ONE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

CRAIG A. ANDERSON, OF WASHINGTON

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS TWO, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

MIKE OKAMURA, OF VIRGINIA
PETER O'MEARA EVANS, OF VIRGINIA
MARCUS A. MCCHRISTIAN, OF VIRGINIA
ERIC JAMES MENDENHALL, OF VIRGINIA

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

OMAR AHMED ALI, OF GEORGIA
KATHLEEN A. BRESNAHAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ARLEEN GRACE R. GENUINO, OF CALIFORNIA
GABRIEL HONS-OLIVIER, OF FLORIDA
DIANE MARGARET KOHN, OF MICHIGAN
TRACY R. THORNTON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOSEPH W. A. VASQUEZ, OF ALASKA

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS FOUR, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

FAREED A. ABDULLAH, OF GEORGIA
JAMES ROBERT ABESHAUS, OF FLORIDA
EMILY GRACE ABRAHAM, OF ILLINOIS
YVON ACCIUS, OF FLORIDA
JONATHAN DANIEL ADAMS, OF VIRGINIA
CASEY L. ADDIS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BOBBY (ROBERT) ADELSON, JR., OF FLORIDA
OMAR SYED AHMED, OF VIRGINIA
RACHEL A. AICHER, OF NEW YORK
CAROLINE A AMBERGER, OF FLORIDA
MATTHEW R. ANDRIS, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DAVID N. ARIZMENDI, OF FLORIDA
LAUREN BROOKS ARMENISE, OF MARYLAND
BRANDON C. BARON, OF FLORIDA
DEANNA KRISTINE BEARDEN, OF TEXAS
HARVEY LEWIS BEASLEY, JR., OF FLORIDA
ALISON L. BEHLING, OF WEST VIRGINIA
GEOFFREY N. BENLISHA, OF TENNESSEE
AARON S. BENESE, OF FLORIDA
ADAM RYDER BENZ, OF FLORIDA
SOMER BESSIRE-BRERS, OF NEVADA
THOMAS DEE BEVAN, OF UTAH
RAIN CHE BIAN, OF NEW YORK
CORI BICKEL, OF GEORGIA
THOMAS M. BILLS, OF OHIO
IRMIE KEELER BLANTON III, OF FLORIDA
MATTHEW L. BLIVINS, OF COLORADO
CARLO WISE BOEHM, OF TEXAS
BENJIMAN C. BOHNM, OF ARKANSAS
THOMAS CHARLES BOLLATI, OF FLORIDA
COREY BORDENKECHER, OF INDIANA
ADRIENNE C. BORY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JON BOWERMASTER, OF MICHIGAN
ERIN ELIZABETH BOYER, OF NORTH CAROLINA
ALEXIA MCNEAL BRANCH, OF CALIFORNIA
STEVEN ARTHUR CONNETT BREMNER, OF MISSOURI
M. ALYNN BROOKS-LASURE, OF VIRGINIA
THEODORE BROSIUS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
THOMAS V.B. BROUNS, OF CALIFORNIA
ALISON SARAH BROWN, OF WASHINGTON
IAN T. BROWN, OF TEXAS
ANYA YAKHEDTS BRUNSON, OF FLORIDA
ZSOFIA BUDAI, OF MINNESOTA
CHRISTINE BUZZARD, OF OKLAHOMA
SARAH EMILY CALDERON HAMILTON, OF TEXAS
JUAN MANUEL CAMMARANO, OF MARYLAND
JUN CARLOS CAMPOS, OF FLORIDA
ALFRED JOHN CANIGLIA III, OF MISSOURI
AMELLE S. CANTER, OF TEXAS
CHRISTIAN HIRAM CARDONA, OF NEW YORK
ELLIOT ROSS CARMEAN, OF PENNSYLVANIA
DAVID RYAN CARR, OF OREGON
MELNIE ROSIE CARTER, OF WASHINGTON
AMANDA J. CAULDWELL, OF CALIFORNIA
MICHAEL CAVIEY, OF WISCONSIN
VICTORIA MORGANNE TYSZKA CEDENO, OF MICHIGAN
ANDREW CHARPMAN, OF NORTH CAROLINA
HOWARD H. CHYUNG, OF NEW YORK
EMILY KATHLEEN CINTORA, OF ARIZONA
BENJAMIN LEE COBURN, OF GEORGIA
WILLIAM BENJAMIN COCKS, OF FLORIDA
PAUL C. COLOMBINI, OF MARYLAND
PATRICK EVANS CONNALLY, OF WASHINGTON
JOSEPH G. CORADARO, OF TENNESSEE
SETH AARON CORNELL, OF PENNSYLVANIA
JOANNE ILENE COSSITT, OF CONNECTICUT
ROCCO COSTA, OF CALIFORNIA
LOGAN RISHARD COUNCIL, OF NORTH CAROLINA
GREGORY ROY COWAN, OF TEXAS
LISA MARGARET COWLEY, OF TEXAS
TODD WILSON ARDELL CRAWFORD, OF OREGON
ANDREW D. CROSSON, OF TENNESSEE
ROBERT J. CROTTY, OF WASHINGTON
EVA HELENE D'AMBROSIO, OF INDIANA
JACKSON C. DART, OF MICHIGAN
IRENE ARINO DE LA RUBIA, OF FLORIDA
CARRIE A. DENVEY, OF VIRGINIA
JULIA SAMPSON DILLARD, OF CALIFORNIA
AMANDA WICKHAM DIXON, OF TENNESSEE
CHRISTOPHER J. DOSTAL, OF PENNSYLVANIA
RUTH LILLIAN DOWE, OF NEW YORK
MICHAEL JOSEPH DURAN, OF FLORIDA
SHEILA-ANNE F. EBERT, OF NEVADA
JESSICA DAWN EICHER, OF COLORADO
DONYA SHANE ELDRIDGE, OF FLORIDA
BENJAMIN S. EMBURY, OF VIRGINIA
DONALD CLAYTON EMERICK, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
RYAN SCOTT ENGEN, OF WASHINGTON
MARY CHRISTINE ERMEL, OF TEXAS
ANNA ESTRINA, OF VIRGINIA

JACQUES PAUL ETIENNE, OF NEW YORK
ALEXANDRA ELIZABETH EVANS, OF TEXAS
MONICA SAGEBIEL EWING, OF TEXAS
S. ADAM FERGUSON, OF UTAH
SAMUEL R. FERGUSON, OF UTAH
KEVIN CHRISTOPHER FISHER, OF UTAH
DOUGLAS GEORGE FOWLER, OF WYOMING
JASON O. FROHNMAYER, OF OREGON
KEVIN T. FUREY, OF MONTANA
MAIDA A. FURNIA, OF VIRGINIA
BRENDA B. GABRIEL, OF FLORIDA
SOPHIE YAN GAO, OF MASSACHUSETTS
MARC GARTNER, OF CALIFORNIA
PHILLIP M. GATINS, OF FLORIDA
JOSEPH P. GIBLIN, OF NEW YORK
DAMON MATTHEW GOFORTH, OF TEXAS
ARIEL M. GORE, OF ILLINOIS
NAIMA NILAJA MARIAMA GREEN, OF OHIO
ANDREW M. GRILLOS, OF CALIFORNIA
NATALYA IVANOVNA GROKH, OF VIRGINIA
GRETA L. GROMOVICH, OF KANSAS
SARAH REBECCA GROSSBLATT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

CASSANDRA HAGAR, OF TEXAS
KRISTY L. HALLER, OF MARYLAND
JAMES W. HALLOCK, OF NEW YORK
JASON MATTHEW HAMMONTREE, OF CALIFORNIA
PAUL MICHAEL HANNA, OF FLORIDA
CHRISTINE L. HARPER, OF ALABAMA
VANESSA H. HARPER, OF CONNECTICUT
NOEL URBANO HARTLEY, OF TEXAS
HAKIM J. HASAN, OF OREGON
JOHN TRYGVE HAS-ELLISON, OF TEXAS
KRISTIN KARIN HAWKINS, OF VIRGINIA
ANNALEISE HEILGENSTEIN, OF TEXAS
CHRISTOPHER D. HELMKAMP, OF VIRGINIA
CHARLES A. HENDRIX, OF MINNESOTA
JAMES M. HENRY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HEIDI HERSCHDEDE, OF WISCONSIN
ZEIRA HIR-JI, OF NEW YORK
JOHN OMAR HISHMEH, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTIN HO, OF MASSACHUSETTS
KURT DANIEL HOLMGREN, OF VIRGINIA
DANIEL JOSEPH HORSFALL, OF TENNESSEE
ERIN HOYT, OF CALIFORNIA
JULIA MARGARETA HOZAKOWSKA, OF PENNSYLVANIA
TRAVIS A. HUNNICUTT, OF CALIFORNIA
SHARLINE HUSSAIN-MORGAN, OF NEW YORK
JASON S. HWANG, OF NEW JERSEY
THOMAS S. HWELI, OF CALIFORNIA
MEGAN R. HRID, OF TENNESSEE
GREG PARDO III, OF TEXAS
RYAN SCOTT INGRASSIA, OF CALIFORNIA
RYAN M. JANJA, OF MASSACHUSETTS
CYNTHIA L. JEFFERIES, OF TEXAS
JAMES WESLEY JEFFERS, OF WEST VIRGINIA
SAMANTHA ANN JENKINS, OF WASHINGTON
JEREMY R. JEWETT, OF WISCONSIN
CHRISTOPHER A. JONES, OF ILLINOIS
TODD HAROLD JUNGENBERG, OF TENNESSEE
ANDREA R. KALAN, OF TEXAS
IVAN FALAMA KAMARA, OF ARIZONA
CHRISTOPHER A. KEELLY, OF UTAH
ANDREW E. KELLY, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW A. KELLY, OF NEW YORK
DEVIN JAMES KENNINGTON, OF MARYLAND
JOHN PAUL KILL, JR., OF GEORGIA
CRAIG P. KIM, OF WASHINGTON
MICHAEL KISELYCZNYK, OF NEW YORK
NOLAN S. KLEIN, OF TENNESSEE
JEFFREY KLICK, OF TEXAS
JOHN CHARLES KMETZ, OF OKLAHOMA
JOEL ERIK KNIGHT, OF NEW MEXICO
THOMAS D. KOHL, OF FLORIDA
DEREK R. KOLB, OF CALIFORNIA
DANIELLE KORSHAK, OF NEW YORK
LYNN CHUANG KRAMER, OF TEXAS
JINGPING LAI, OF CALIFORNIA
NATALIE BONJOC LEAHY, OF CALIFORNIA
ANDREW D. LEBKUCHEER, OF MINNESOTA
STEPHEN F. LECOMPT, OF TEXAS
CHUNG JOON-LEE, OF CALIFORNIA
SONAM LIBERMAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ELIZABETH SHU-ING LU, OF FLORIDA
EMMA CONDOLOMACH, OF MINNESOTA
BENJAMIN J. LOWENBERG, OF WISCONSIN
BONNIE M. MACE, OF IOWA
DANIELLE ANNE MANISCALCO, OF MASSACHUSETTS
RACHEL M. MARTINEZ, OF FLORIDA
THEODORE THOMAS MASSEY, OF VIRGINIA
ALEXANDER MAYER, OF TEXAS
MOLLY KATHERINE MAYFIELD BARBEE, OF FLORIDA
MATTHEW ROBERT MCCALLISTER, OF PENNSYLVANIA
PATRICK CALEY MCCORMICK, OF TEXAS
DEBORAH M. MCFARLAND, OF ARIZONA
BRADLEY T. MCCUIRE, OF VIRGINIA
KERRY EVELYN MCINTOSH, OF VERMONT
DAVID DIXON MCKAY, OF UTAH
MAUREEN A. MCNICHOLL, OF VIRGINIA
THEODORE ANDREW MEINHOVER, OF MINNESOTA
MARC A.J. MELNIN, OF WASHINGTON
MEGHAN E. MERCIER, OF FLORIDA
MEREDITH T. METZLER, OF TEXAS
ADAM L. MICHELOW, OF ARIZONA
KARL J. MILLER, OF FLORIDA
SCOTT M. MILLER, OF TEXAS
CATHERINE T. MILLER-LITTLE, OF TEXAS
MOLLY LYNN MITCHELL-GOODS, OF NORTH CAROLINA
YANG ZHANG MONTEIRO, OF FLORIDA
JAIME LYNETTE MOODY, OF LOUISIANA
KRISTINE MORRISSEY, OF MARYLAND
GRANT HANLEY MORROW, OF PENNSYLVANIA
KATHLEEN D. MUEENCH, OF CONNECTICUT
VINCENT M. MUT-TRACY, OF VERMONT
JULIE NAUMAN, OF FLORIDA
RAY PATRICE NAYLER, OF CALIFORNIA
BOBBIE S. NEAL, OF VIRGINIA