

“(iii) In any case in which a social security account number has been issued to a child who has not attained the age of 14 pursuant to subclause (IV) or (V) of clause (i) and it is demonstrated by evidence, as determined by the Commissioner of Social Security, and submitted under penalty of perjury to the Commissioner by a parent or guardian of the child that in the course of transmission of a social security card to the child, the confidentiality of such number has been compromised by reason of loss or theft of such social security card, the Commissioner shall issue a new social security account number to such child and make note in the records maintained with respect to such child of the pertinent information received by the Commissioner regarding the loss or theft of the social security card.”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, a lost or stolen Social Security number can cause a lifetime of harm to American children. Every year, more than a million children become victims of identity fraud.

Current Social Security Administration policy makes it extremely difficult for families to get a new Social Security number for a child, even when families know the original number was compromised through no fault of their own.

Previously, the Ways and Means Committee heard direct testimony from a mother who had to battle with the Social Security Administration when her 1-month-old child's Social Security number was compromised, and she was denied a new number.

This bill, the Social Security Child Protection Act of 2025, sponsored by Representative SMUCKER, will help families when their child's Social Security number is lost or stolen. It requires the SSA to issue a new number to children under the age of 14 when the child's card has been compromised versus sitting around and waiting for a malicious act to take place.

This is a straightforward solution that will help protect children and families from fraud.

I urge my colleagues to support this so we can continue to stand together to better safeguard the identities of American kids.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I certainly think that H.R. 5348, the Social Security Child Protection Act of 2025, which passed the Ways and Means Committee with overwhelming bipartisan support, deserves to be supported by this body.

As has been indicated, this legislation would direct the SSA to issue a new Social Security number to a child under 14 if it was stolen in the course of being mailed.

The current policy brings nothing but misery upon a child and a new family, and I think that this is a commonsense effort to mend this grievous bureaucratic conundrum that parents have to face.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SMUCKER).

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman SMITH for the opportunity to bring this up in committee and then for moving it out of committee. I thank the leader for bringing it to the floor for a vote.

This is about helping kids. I know when we talk about Social Security, we don't often think about kids. But remember, every child receives a Social Security number that follows them around for the rest of their life. Every year, there are kids whose Social Security numbers are lost or stolen in the mail and exposed to fraudsters.

Because children don't open bank accounts, they don't apply for lines of credit, and they don't seek employment, it can take them years to discover that their identity was stolen or to realize the effects of a stolen identity.

Under current policy, even if the child is aware that the Social Security number was stolen, a child must become victimized by actual fraud before the Social Security Administration will give them a new number.

That is ridiculous. If my bank issued a credit card and I didn't receive it in the mail, they wouldn't send me another copy of the same card. They would cancel the old one and send me a new card. Why would we treat our children any differently? We shouldn't.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to vote for the Social Security Child Protection Act. This bill would simply require that the Social Security Administration issue a new, different Social Security number to a child under the age of 14 if the card has been lost or stolen while being issued to the child in the mail.

Mr. Speaker, it is a simple fix to protect our children and make the process of interacting with the Social Security Administration easier. I urge my colleagues to vote “yes.”

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for closing.

Mr. Speaker, this is a commonsense bill, and it will strengthen customer service for children whose Social Security card has been lost or stolen in the mail.

While Mr. SMUCKER described this as a very simple, commonsense bill, I think the importance of this is it demonstrates that on a bipartisan basis we can solve problems. You always start with the little things and work yourself forward.

If providing greater customer service through the Social Security Administration is a goal that has strong bipartisan support, I think that that really gives us a runway to do bigger things.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

A mother testifying before the Ways and Means Committee told us how it took “hours of effort over months” to protect her daughter from identity theft and that “the threat will never completely go away unless she is assigned a new Social Security number.”

This mother had to battle with the SSA after her infant daughter's Social Security number was compromised. Unfortunately, the story is all too common for millions of Americans who have had their Social Security numbers stolen or misused each year.

By taking swift action today, we can prevent a lifetime of financial harm to American children across the country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5348, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

FAIR AND ACCOUNTABLE IRS REVIEWS ACT

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5346) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform certain penalty and interest provisions, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5346

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Fair and Accountable IRS Reviews Act”.

SEC. 2. PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ASSESSMENT OF PENALTIES.

(a) **APPROVAL OF ASSESSMENT.**—Section 6751(b)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—No penalty under this title shall be assessed or entered unless, before any written communication with respect to such penalty (including proposal of a penalty as an adjustment) is sent to the taxpayer, the initial determination of such assessment is personally approved (in writing) by the immediate supervisor of the individual making such determination or such higher level official as the Secretary may designate.”.

(b) **IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR DEFINED.**—Section 6751(b) of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) **IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR.**—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘immediate supervisor’ means, with respect to an individual making a determination under paragraph (1), the person to whom such individual reports.”.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall apply to notices issued, and penalties assessed, after December 31, 2025.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

□ 1720

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Fair and Accountable IRS Reviews Act introduced by our colleague, Representative GLENN GROTHMAN.

While not a member of the Committee on Ways and Means, I know Representative GROTHMAN to be a tireless advocate for American taxpayers, as represented by this important piece of legislation that will go a very long way toward protecting their rights.

The legislation ensures that rogue IRS employees are not able to unfairly impose penalties and fines on taxpayers without going through proper channels of authorization and doing so in a timely manner.

Right now, an IRS agent can impose a penalty on an American taxpayer before obtaining a supervisor's approval. Moreover, they can shop around for any other employee at the agency that they wish to seek permission from since current law does not require approval from a direct supervisor.

These loopholes undermine the no-signature, no-penalty principle. Representative GROTHMAN's bill received unanimous support at the Committee on Ways and Means. It is an important policy reform that will reinforce fair treatment of taxpayers at the IRS.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5346, the Fair and Accountable IRS Reviews Act.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman JASON SMITH for putting this bill on the floor, and I thank the gentleman for always remembering that it is better to do things in a bipartisan way.

This bill clarifies procedures under section 6751 of the Internal Revenue Code and fixes an ongoing controversy regarding tax penalties and IRS supervisory approvals.

The IRS Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998 added section 6751 to the Internal Revenue Code, which says that certain tax penalties shall not be assessed unless the initial determination of the assessment is personally approved, in writing, by the immediate supervisor of the employee making the determination, or a higher-level official.

This provision, in its current form, does not define when supervisory approval must be obtained or who is considered an immediate supervisor. The lack of definition has led to conflicting decisions in the court regarding the time of approvals and among whom at the IRS can make such approvals.

Due to this widespread confusion, the National Taxpayer Advocate recommended that Congress enact legislation to fix this provision. Therefore, this bill clarifies that an IRS employee must obtain supervisory approval in writing before any written communication is sent to a taxpayer about certain proposed penalties. It also clarifies that an IRS employee's immediate supervisor is a person to whom the employee reports.

In addition to providing clarity, this bill also raises \$117 million over the next 10 years. This bill passed the Committee on Ways and Means with overwhelming bipartisan support.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this very important clarification bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the previous speakers for their kind words and assistance on this bill. I also will address the Fair and Accountable IRS Reviews Act.

For decades, Federal laws required that before the IRS can impose penalties on a taxpayer, an agent must first receive written approval from that agent's immediate supervisor.

Congress put this safeguard in place to ensure that penalties are imposed fairly, consistently, and with appropriate oversight. A supervisor's signature helps prevent the use of penalties as a pressure tactic and creates a transparent record that benefits both

taxpayers and the government in collection and appeals proceedings.

In recent years, unfortunately, a regulatory interpretation complicated the intent of this longstanding statute. Instead of adhering to the clear requirement that an agent's immediate supervisor must approve a penalty at the time of the initial determination, supervisory appeal could be obtained at any point in the process and the term “immediate supervisor” was broadened beyond Congress' original intent.

As a result, an agent could propose a penalty without prior review and later seek approval from a wide range of individuals, weakening the transparency and accountability that the law was designed to ensure.

The Fair and Accountable IRS Reviews Act restores clarity. It reaffirms that an IRS agent's actual immediate supervisor must provide written approval at the initial determination of a penalty, ensuring proper oversight from the start. This simple clarification strengthens the taxpayer protections and promotes a consistent and reliable penalty process.

Mr. Speaker, Americans deserve a tax system that is fair, predictable, and transparent. This bill moves us closer to that goal.

I thank Chairman SMITH for his leadership on the Committee on Ways and Means and all of the Members on the other side of the aisle who helped shoot it out of the committee on such a bipartisan basis. I thank Chairman SMITH for his commitment to strengthening fairness and accountability within our tax system.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for the purposes of closing.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5346 is a common-sense bill that will help taxpayers and the courts. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bill because not only is it common sense, but it will allow for more efficiency in our IRS code. I think it is really important that both sides of the aisle, Democrats and Republicans, support such an efficient and common-sense bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, American taxpayers should not be at the mercy of rogue IRS agents who are handing out fines without reasonable due process. At the very least, agents ought to have actual prior approval before issuing a penalty and should not be allowed to go around looking for a sympathetic employee to grant them that approval.

I commend our colleague, Representative GROTHMAN, for introducing this straightforward legislation that puts in place some guardrails around the IRS and its agents. This bill will help restore integrity to the agency's processes. Above all, it will protect the

rights of American taxpayers, whose interests we must continue to look out for.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to vote "yes" on the Fair and Accountable IRS Reviews Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5346, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

TAX COURT IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5349) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve services provided to taxpayers by the Internal Revenue Service by providing greater judicial review, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5349

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; ETC.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the "Tax Court Improvement Act".

(b) **AMENDMENT OF 1986 CODE.**—Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in this Act an amendment is expressed in terms of an amendment to a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(c) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; etc.

Sec. 2. Authorization of subpoenas before hearings to facilitate settlements.

Sec. 3. Authorization of special trial judges to hear additional cases and address contempt.

Sec. 4. Disqualification of judges and special trial judges.

Sec. 5. Clarification of Tax Court jurisdiction to apply equitable tolling in deficiency cases.

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF SUBPOENAS BEFORE HEARINGS TO FACILITATE SETTLEMENTS.

Section 7456(a) is amended to read as follows:

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—

“(1) **ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS.**—For the efficient administration of the functions vested in the Tax Court or any division thereof, any judge or special trial judge, the clerk or the clerk's deputies, as such, or any other employee of the Tax Court designated in writing for the purpose by the chief judge, may administer oaths or affirmations.

“(2) **SUBPOENA AUTHORITY.**—Any judge or special trial judge may examine witnesses and require, by subpoena ordered by the Tax Court or any division thereof and signed by the judge or special trial judge (or by the clerk of the Tax Court or by any other employee of the Tax Court when acting as deputy clerk), any of the following:

“(A) The attendance of parties or witnesses.

“(B) The production of books, papers, documents, electronically stored information, or tangible things from any place in the United States

by any party or witness having custody or control thereof for purposes of discovery or for use of the things produced as evidence in accordance with the rules and orders of the Tax Court. Any such subpoena shall be issued and served, and compliance therewith shall be compelled, as provided in the rules and orders of the Tax Court.

“(3) **DEPOSITIONS.**—Pursuant to rules and orders of the Court, the deposition of a witness may be taken before any designated individual competent to administer oaths under this title. Any deposition testimony shall be reduced to writing by the individual taking the deposition, or under such individual's direction, and shall be subscribed by the deponent.”.

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF SPECIAL TRIAL JUDGES TO HEAR ADDITIONAL CASES AND ADDRESS CONTEMPT.

(a) **CONSENT TO ASSIGNMENT.**—Section 7443A(b) is amended by striking “and” at the end of paragraph (6), by redesignating paragraph (7) as paragraph (8), and by inserting after paragraph (6) the following new paragraph:

“(7) upon the consent of the parties, and pursuant to rules promulgated by the Tax Court, any proceeding not described in paragraphs (1) through (6), and”, and

(b) **AUTHORIZING SPECIAL TRIAL JUDGE.**—Section 7443A(c) is amended by striking “or (6)” and inserting “(6), or (7)”.

(c) **CONTEMPT AUTHORITY.**—Section 7443A is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(f) **INCIDENTAL POWERS.**—A special trial judge appointed under this section shall have the power to punish for contempt of the authority of the Tax Court as provided in section 7456(c), except the sentence imposed by such a special trial judge for any contempt shall not exceed the penalties for a Class C misdemeanor as set forth in sections 3571(b)(6) and 3581(b)(8) of title 18, United States Code. This subsection shall not be construed to limit the authority of a special trial judge to order sanctions under any other statute or any rule of the Tax Court prescribed pursuant to section 7453.”.

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by subsections (a) and (b) shall take effect on the date the United States Tax Court adopts rules implementing the consent procedures of section 7443A.

SEC. 4. DISQUALIFICATION OF JUDGES AND SPECIAL TRIAL JUDGES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Part II of subchapter C of chapter 76 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“SEC. 7467. DISQUALIFICATION OF JUDGE OR SPECIAL TRIAL JUDGE.

“Section 455 of title 28, United States Code, shall apply to judges, special trial judges, and proceedings of the Tax Court.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections for such part is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“Sec. 7467. Disqualification of judge or special trial judge.”.

SEC. 5. CLARIFICATION OF TAX COURT JURISDICTION TO APPLY EQUITABLE TOLLING IN DEFICIENCY CASES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 7451(b) is amended to read as follows:

“(b) **TOLLING OF TIME.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Tax Court shall have jurisdiction to toll the period for filing a petition under section 6213(a) in cases in which the Tax Court determines based on the facts and circumstances that equity warrants such tolling.

“(2) **RULES FOR INACCESSIBLE FILING LOCATIONS.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, in any case (including by reason of a lapse in appropriations) in which a filing location is inaccessible or otherwise unavailable to the general public on the date a petition is due, the relevant time period for filing

such petition shall be tolled for the number of days within the period of inaccessibility plus an additional 14 days.

“(B) **FILING LOCATION.**—For purposes of this paragraph, the term ‘filing location’ means—

“(i) the office of the clerk of the Tax Court, or

“(ii) any on-line portal made available by the Tax Court for electronic filing of petitions.”.

(b) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 7459(d) is amended—

(1) by striking “If a petition” and inserting the following:

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—If a petition”, and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2) **EXCEPTION.**—Paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to any dismissal which is solely based on a determination of the Tax Court not to toll the period for filing a petition under section 6213(a).”.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall apply to filings made after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) **NO INFERENCE.**—The amendment made by subsections (a) shall not be construed to create any inference with respect to the jurisdiction of the Tax Court with respect to any petition filed on or before the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

□ 1730

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Tax Court Improvement Act, bipartisan legislation introduced by Representatives NATHANIEL MORAN and TERRI SEWELL. As a former judge, Congressman MORAN knows the importance of fully protecting Americans' legal rights and due process, and I appreciate his leadership on this issue.

This bill strengthens taxpayer rights during judicial proceedings before the U.S. Tax Court.

The court will be able to more expeditiously resolve cases as the legislation enhances the efficiency of its judicial review to the benefit of the taxpayer. This will increase the court's productivity, and Tax Court judges will also be held to the same disqualification standards as other judges. Finally, the court will now have the ability to extend taxpayer deadlines where timely filing is impractical.

The U.S. Tax Court is the only venue where taxpayers can dispute a tax estimate without first paying that tax. Taxpayers must stand on equal footing when going toe-to-toe with the IRS. Without the guarantee of rights, taxpayers are put in a situation where the