

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 12, 2019

The Honorable Richard Neal
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Neal,

We write to express our concern regarding your request for the Ways and Means Committee to receive and review President Donald J. Trump's private tax returns for the previous six years. We ask for you to discontinue your effort to obtain President Trump's private tax returns until you expand upon your justification for this request.

As you well know, there is no legal requirement for a presidential candidate or sitting president to release his tax returns. President Trump, a sitting president, has not been charged with a crime or fraud of any kind. The absence of any wrongdoing belies a potential ulterior motive for this request.

Moreover, your request for President Trump's tax returns lacks a valid legislative purpose and is an infringement on one's Fourth Amendment rights. If the purpose of this request is truly to evaluate how "the IRS audits and enforces the Federal tax laws against a president," why then do you request Donald Trump's tax returns for years before he was sworn in as president?

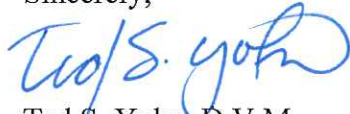
Instead, this request raises serious cause for skepticism about the fairness of our governmental systems in exchange for perceived political gains. Oversight is one of the most important roles of the legislative branch. However, using the investigative powers of Congress to target political opponents in a manner such as this squanders the legitimacy of this important function and this institution. We are concerned that if political targeting like this is done to one U.S. citizen, it could be done to any U.S. citizen in the future. In fact, in the 115th Congress the Committee on Ways and Means determined that such a request would be an "abuse of authority" and "set a dangerous precedent by targeting a single individual's confidential tax returns and associated financial documents for disclosure".¹

In recent years, we have seen enough abuses by federal agencies, including Lois Lerner's targeting of conservative non-profits; protecting Hillary Clinton's private email server and allowing State Department classified records to be destroyed. Your pursuit of Donald J. Trump's tax returns fits too neatly into this pattern of government abuses.

¹ H. Comm. On Ways & Means, H. Rept. No. 115-309, at 2, 3 (2017),
<https://www.congress.gov/115/crpt/hrpt309/CRPT-115hrpt309.pdf>

For these reasons, we the undersigned urge you to discontinue the effort to obtain President Trump's private tax records, for which we believe you have the most dubious justifications and motives, until you expand upon your justification for this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ted S. Yoho". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ted S. Yoho, D.V.M.

Member of Congress