

April 24, 2020

The Honorable Steven T. Mnuchin
Secretary of the Treasury
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20220

The Honorable Charles P. Rettig
Commissioner
Internal Revenue Service
1111 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20224

Dear Secretary Mnuchin and Commissioner Rettig:

We write to request that you explore options for allowing certain Social Security and Railroad Retirement beneficiaries with dependents who missed the April 22nd deadline to still receive the additional \$500 per qualified dependent this year. We are concerned that individuals were not able to meet the quick turnaround announced in the April 20th guidance and will otherwise have to wait until next year to receive the full economic impact payments they are intended to receive under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Additionally, we ask for consideration to be given to other federal beneficiaries who may be affected by a future deadline, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients and veterans receiving Compensation & Pension benefits.

We appreciate your work with the Social Security Administration (SSA) and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to ensure that those seniors, individuals with disabilities, and their families who are non-filers and receive Social Security, Railroad Retirement, SSI, or VA benefits are able to obtain a \$1,200 economic impact payment without having to take additional action. The effort to add these groups to the automatic payments process on an expedited basis eliminates a bureaucratic hurdle for many of those most vulnerable to this pandemic and ensures that these individuals will quickly receive this much-needed financial relief.

We recognize that efforts to deliver the economic impact payments to qualified individuals as quickly as possible may make it necessary for some groups to take additional action to receive their full payments. In particular, individuals who receive benefits from the SSA or VA, did not file a tax return in 2018 or 2019, and have children under age 17 must provide further information to the IRS to receive the additional \$500 payment per qualifying dependent. We appreciate the overall objective of not delaying the payments for all beneficiaries while this additional information is obtained.

We are concerned, however, that guidance released on April 20th allowed just two days for non-filing Social Security and Railroad Retirement beneficiaries with qualifying dependents to provide information to the IRS or risk not receiving their qualifying dependent payment until next year. This short timeline and the limited outreach to-date risk leaving many of these beneficiaries unaware of the need to take immediate action to receive the full CARES Act payments this year. Further, only providing an online option may preclude some individuals

from providing the needed information. The online non-filer portal may not be an accessible option for those who do not have internet access in their homes and are not currently able to use the computer at their local community center due to safety measures in place during the coronavirus pandemic. The instructions for the online non-filers portal also continue to tell Social Security and Railroad Retirement beneficiaries that they should not use the portal.

Given the short timeline and limited outreach, we ask you to explore all available options for allowing non-filing Social Security and Railroad Retirement beneficiaries with dependents who missed the April 22nd deadline to receive the additional \$500 per qualified dependent without having to wait until next year. We also urge you to work with stakeholders to engage in immediate, targeted outreach to those federal benefit recipients with dependents who have not filed a 2018 or 2019 tax return and ask that you consider options for a non-web-based alternative to the online non-filer portal.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator



Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator



Maggie Hassan
United States Senator



Bill Cassidy, M.D.
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator